Muhammad IQBAL

شکوہ و جوابِ شکوہ

Shikwa & Jawab-i-Shikwa

COMPLAINT AND ANSWER

Iqbal's Dialogue with Allah

Translated from the Urdu
with an introduction by

KHUSHWANT SINGH


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MUHAMMAD

IQBAL

Shikwa and *Jawab-i-Shikwa*
Complaint and Answer

Though much of Iqbal's best poetry is written in Persian, notably *Asrar-i-khudi* (1915) and *Javednama* (1932), he is a poet of colossal stature in Urdu, the language he chose to put across his ideas of a regenerated Islam as the hope of the world.

Iqbal especially does this in two of his most controversial poems, *Shikwa* (1909) and *Jawab-i-Shikwa* (1913). They extol the legacy of Islam and its civilizing role in history, bemoan the fate of Muslims everywhere, and squarely confront the dilemmas of Islam in modern times. *Shikwa* is, thus, in the form of a complaint to Allah for having let down the Muslims, and *Jawab-i-Shikwa* is Allah's reply to the poet's complaint. The poems employ some of the traditional Sufi imagery, but the thrust of their arguments is strongly Western. They represent a poignant effort to reconcile Islam and the West. Though Iqbal's message is expressed in Islamic terms, Asians of all faiths have acknowledged his inspiration.

Earlier translations in English of these poems have largely been unsuccessful. The present translation by Khushwant Singh makes Iqbal come alive on the page. It includes an introduction and explanatory notes by him, and a foreword by Rafiq Zakaria, Chancellor, Jamia Urdu, Aligarh and a Member of Parliament.

Khushwant Singh, novelist, translator and historian, is the author of *Train to Pakistan* (1955), *The Mark of Vishnu and Other Stories* (1950), *Hymns of Nanak the Guru* (1969) and *A History of the Sikhs 1469-1964* (1963-66). Currently, he is editor of *The Hindustan Times*, and a nominated member of the Rajya Sabha.

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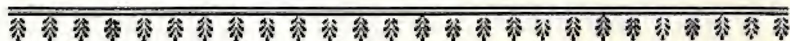
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Foreword

Iqbal defies translation. His poems, whether in Urdu or Persian, have both historical and spiritual overtones. His expressions are steeped in Islamic lore. It is almost impossible to understand them without a proper knowledge of the Muslim heritage. That has been both the weakness and strength of his poetry; its weakness lies in its appeal being confined mainly to the followers of the Prophet Muhammad; its strength, on the other hand, consists in the hypnotic spell that it has cast on Muslims.

Many have tried to translate Iqbal's poetry into English; most of them have failed. Nicholson's translation of *Asrar-i-khudi* ('Secrets of the Self') is, no doubt, a commendable effort; but he could grapple with the meanings of Iqbal's verses because he was not only a Persian scholar but was also Iqbal's teacher. There have been others, notably Victor Kiernan and A.J. Arberry, whose English renderings of some of Iqbal's Persian poems are of a high order. While Kiernan managed to convey the beauty of some of Iqbal's earlier Urdu poems, Arberry's translation, of the Urdu poems, *Shikwa* and *Jawab-i-Shikwa,* was a disaster. Arberry did not know a word of Urdu, and rendered these poems into English on the basis of their English translation by an Urdu-knowing friend. No greater injustice to these poems, full of Islamic history and religious fervour, could have been done by a scholar.

I was so unhappy with Arberry's translation of these poems, that I requested my friend, Sardar Khushwant Singh, to undo the wrong which Arberry, unknowingly and with the best intentions, had been made to do by some well-meaning admirers of Iqbal. The idea appealed to Mr Singh. He had read these poems many times, and was aware of the appeal they had for Muslims. Having become a champion of their cause by presenting the Muslim case boldly and frankly in the pages of *The Illustrated Weekly of India*, which he so admirably edited for almost



ten years, Mr Singh was familiar with their aspirations. Soon he realized that while Iqbal sounded musical to the ear, his expressions were often so complicated that they were not easy to understand. To translate them into English called for great courage, and Mr Singh has been equal to the task. Every lover of Iqbal will remain grateful to him for this feat.

Despite the fact that Iqbal's greatness both as a poet and philosopher is increasingly acknowledged, most of his poems are still unavailable in the West. This is unfortunate because Iqbal's poetry was as much influenced by the West as by Islam. As he himself admitted, 'Most of my life has been spent in the study of European philosophy, and that viewpoint has become my second nature. Consciously, or unconsciously I study the realities and truths of Islam from the same point of view. I have experienced this many a time, that while talking in Urdu, I cannot express all that I want to say in that language.' Like his great contemporary, Jawaharlal Nehru who, according to Maulana Azad, spoke in English even in his dreams, Iqbal too was more precise in expressing his philosophical ideas in English rather than Urdu. This is obvious from a reading of Iqbal's English lectures, published under the title, *The Reconstruction of Religious Thought in Islam*, which gives a much fuller account of his religious outlook than most of his poems. But despite this affinity with the West, Iqbal could never come nearer to it, unlike his other great contemporary Rabindranath Tagore, whose book of poems *Gitanjali*, translated into English, earned him the Nobel Prize for literature. Even today, the West's ignorance of Iqbal, as the eminent English novelist, E.M. Forster, has said, is 'extraordinary'. In a broadcast on the Home Service of the B.B.C. in 1946, Forster presented Iqbal as 'an orthodox Muslim' and 'anti-humanitarian in his outlook'. I wrote to Forster, explaining how wrong he was in his assessment of the poet on both these counts. Foster's reply is worth quoting:

Dear Zakaria,
Thank you for your most interesting letter. I am very glad indeed that you wrote, for I had of course no wish to be unfair to Iqbal, only to do him honour, and my best chance of correcting any of my mistakes about him is through the friendly criticism of people like yourself. My talk will be published in the *Listener* and it will there be fuller than





on the air. For instance, I wrote Iqbal was an 'orthodox Mohammedan but not a conventional one', which brings my point of view nearer to your own. I also wrote 'in a sense anti-humanitarian'. Here again we may agree more than you at first realized. Humanitarian has two senses: (i) development of human powers and (ii) compassion and responsibility felt by the strong for the weak's failures. Iqbal (as far as I can gather from Vahid's book and it is almost my only authority) was humanitarian in sense (i) but not in sense (ii). My talk was written for English people who know even less about Iqbal than I do myself, and I don't think it is very well suited for the better informed Indians . . .believe me.

With kindest regards.

Yours sincerely,
E.M. Forster

Iqbal, it is true, is essentially a poet of Islam, but his Islam is not the Islam of primitive punishments, the veil and bigoted mullas, but the Islam which provided a new light of thought and learning to the world, and of heroic action and glorious deeds. He was devoted to the Prophet and believed in his message. Iqbal regarded as 'nullification' the search for 'inner meanings' or 'hidden meanings', in either the code of Muhammad or in his way of life, which he found not only satisfying but convincing. He blamed the Persian poets for confusing the message of Islam. As he put it, 'The Persian poets tried to undermine the way of Islam by a very roundabout, though apparently heart-alluring, manner. They denounced every good thing of Islam; . . . and made contemplation in a monastery the highest crusade in the way of God.'

Iqbal, on the other hand, preached action. He was a rebel against all the accretions that had gathered around Islam as a result of the Hellenic and Persian influences, and wanted to cleanse it so that the world could, once again, witness the glory of Islam in its pristine form. For the indolence and lethargy that had gripped the Islamic fold, Iqbal blamed the Sufis who, with their Iranian background and Greek ideas, had corrupted the religion of Muhammad. As Iqbal explains, '. . . it is surprising that the whole poetry of Sufism in Islam was produced in the period of political decline. The nation, which exhausts its fund of energy and power, as was the case with the Muslims after the Tartar



invasions, undergoes a change of outlook. Then weakness becomes for it an object of beauty and appreciation; and resignation from the world a source of satisfaction.'

To Iqbal the Hellenic-Persian mysticism was 'nihilism'. He was bitter in his attacks against it. As he observed, 'Having lost the vitality to grapple with the temporal, these prophets of decay apply themselves to the quest of a supposed eternal, and gradually complete the spiritual impoverishment and physical degeneration of their society by evolving a seemingly charming ideal of life which reduces the healthy and powerful to death.' Iqbal refused to uphold the *status quo* in Islam; he attacked the closure of the doors of *ijtihad* ('power of independent interpretation of law') and demanded readjustment of Islamic principles to the needs of the present times. Even when Kemal Ataturk was being condemned as a heretic and enemy of Islam for his secular reforms, Iqbal defended him. His approach in these matters was enlightened.

Iqbal's two poems, *Shikwa* and *Jawab-i-Shikwa*, which Mr Singh has rendered so eloquently into English verse, are a reflection of the agony and pain which he felt at the degeneration of Muslims. This feeling is patent in every couplet. Muslims are repeatedly asked to go back to the early era of Islam, when the spirit of the message of Muhammad goaded his followers to conquer half the world and brought enlightenment to peoples of various regions and colours. Mr Singh has tried to recapture the force of Iqbal's *Shikwa* and *Jawab-i-Shikwa*, which were the outpourings of the poet's heart, and succeeded to a great extent in conveying the powerful impact that these poems created on the Muslim mind.

However, it would be wrong to infer from these poems that Iqbal was an 'orthodox' or, as Mr Forster has tried to explain in his letter to me, a 'conventional' Muslim. He was, in effect, a revolutionary. He glorified the early days of Islam because of its revolutionary role in human affairs, but he did not advocate a return to the primitive conditions of those days. That is why the mullah was anathema to him. No poet has poured more ridicule on the mullah than Iqbal. He describes the mullah in the presence of God thus:

> Being present myself, my impetuous tongue
> I could not to silence resign,



When the order from God of admission above
  Was handed that revered divine.
I humbly addressed the Almighty: Oh Lord,
  Excuse this presumption of mine;
But *he'll* never relish the virgins of Heaven,
  The garden's green borders, the wine!
For Paradise isn't the place for dogmatics
  To quarrel and argue and jangle;
And he, worthy man—second nature to him
  Is the need to dispute and to wrangle.
His business in life was by fuddling their wits
  To put nations and sects in a tangle:
In the sky there is neither a mosque nor a church
  Nor a temple—poor man, he will strangle.

Translated by V.G. Kiernan

How can a poet, who has decried orthodoxy in such strong terms, be described as orthodox. Nor was he conventional, for he broke many a traditional idol in his poems. In a famous poem, recounting the dialogue between Gabriel and Satan, Iqbal extols the greatness of Satan over that of the archangel of Islam. He makes Satan proudly declare:

My rebel spirit has filled man's pinch of dust with fierce ambition.
The warp and woof of mind and reason are woven of my sedition.
The deeps of good and evil you see but from land's far verge;
On which of us, on you or me, descends the tempest's scourge?
Khizar and all your guardians are pale shades: the storms I team
Roll down ocean by ocean, river by river, stream by stream!
But ask of God this question, when His audience you shall find—
Whose blood is it has coloured bright the history of mankind?
In the heart of the Almighty like a pricking thorn I wait;
You only cry for ever *God is Great* and *God is Great*.

Translated by V.G. Kiernan

Iqbal was not anti-humanitarian. No doubt his emphasis was more on the development of human powers—*khudi* is the core of his philosophy—but he felt no less compassion and responsibility for the





weak. in fact his effort to mix socialism and Islam was an earnest of his dedication to the cause of the poor and weak. He opposed Western imperialism because of its exploitation; he denounced capitalism because of its heartlessness. Even the Western form of democracy was unacceptable to him.

> Colossal oppression
> Masquerades in the robes
> Of democracy, and with iron
> Feet it tramples down the
> Weak without remorse.
>
> Translated by Freeland Abbott

There are innumerable poems, in which Iqbal condemned exploitation of the weak by the strong and pleaded for a better life for the exploited. He wrote:

> One nation pastures on the other,
> One sows the grain which another harvests.
> Philosophy teaches that bread is to be pilfered from the hands of the weak,
> And his soul sent from his body.
> Extortion of one's fellowman is the law of the new civilization.
> And it conceals itself behind the veil of commerce.
>
> Translated by Allah Allah

My purpose in referring to the broad humanism of Iqbal was to explain that his attachment to Islam was, in no sense, sectarian. Iqbal was attracted to the teachings of the Prophet because of two fundamental beliefs: the oneness of God and the brotherhood of Man. He believed that no other religion or system advocated it so clearly and practised it so effectively. He denounced nationalism because of its territorial barriers; he saw the history of mankind as nothing but a 'conflict of nations' and an 'unending succession of deadly combats, blood feuds and internecine wars'. The question then naturally arises: Why did he advocate a separate homeland for the Muslims of north-west India? Was it not a reversal of his stand against territorial nationalism? In the first





place Iqbal asked for a Muslim homeland within India and not outside. Secondly, his picture of Pakistan was far different from what it ultimately turned out to be. It could never be confined to the narrow limits of Lahore or Karachi. Iqbal's was an expanding homeland, based on certain humanitarian ideals. Repeatedly he made this clear:

> God-possessed dervish is neither of the East nor of the West,
> My home is neither Delhi, nor Isfahan, nor Samarkand.

His was a restless soul, eager to embrace the whole of humanity.

> You are on the highway. How can you be confined to any
> particular place?
> Pass through Egypt and Hijaz. Leave behind Persia and Syria.

Iqbal's homeland was an utopia, where he wanted to give to the people a new life full of dignity and strength. As he said,

> Men of vision raise new cities.
> My sight is not confined to Kufa or Baghdad.

A few months before his death, he declared, 'Only one unity is dependable and that unity is the brotherhood of man, which is above race, nationality, colour or language.' It will, therefore, be unfair to Iqbal to confine his poetry to Muslims—an error which not only his critics but also his admirers are fond of committing. Iqbal himself has replied to this charge when Dickinson, in his review of *Asrar-i-khudi* ('Secrets of the Self') in the *Nation*, wrote that while Iqbal's philosophy was 'universal', his application of it was 'particular and exclusive', adding, 'Only Muslims are worthy of the kingdom. The rest of the world is either to be absorbed or excluded.' Iqbal replied to Dickinson, explaining that the 'humanitarian ideal' to be fulfilled must have a 'society exclusive in the sense of having a creed and well-defined outline, but ever enlarging its limits by example and persuasion. Such a society, according to my belief, is Islam. This society has so far proved itself a more successful opponent of the race-idea which is probably the hardest barrier in the way of the humanitarian ideal.' But he was at pains



to explain that not Muslims alone, but all men 'are meant for the kingdom of God on earth, provided they say goodbye to their idols of race and nationality and treat one another as personalities.' Far from making out a case for Islam, and holding a brief for it, Iqbal was all for 'universal social reconstruction'; but he could not, in this endeavour, ignore a 'social system' which exists with the express object of doing away with all the distinctions of caste, rank and race.

Iqbal was neither narrow nor bigoted in his approach to life. He had complete faith in the individual and in his capacity to rise to the highest level of development. He was an enemy of discrimination between one human being and another. In his Islam the 'acceptance of social democracy in some suitable form is not a revolution but a return to the original purity of Islam'. As he elaborated, 'That which really matters is a man's faith, his culture, his historical tradition. These are the things which, in my eyes, are worth living for and dying for, and not the piece of earth with which the spirit of man happens to be temporarily associated.'

RAFIQ ZAKARIA

Bombay
13 May 1980



Preface

I have no pretensions to being a scholar of Urdu or of Iqbal. In fact, I had almost forgotten the little Urdu I knew till I began to re-learn it when I took over the editorship of *The Illustrated Weekly of India* in 1969. Amongst the many innovations I introduced in the journal was to provide Indian Muslims a forum to express their point of view on national problems. Since their complaints included discrimination against Urdu, I decided to return to the language. The chief reason why I chose to re-start with Iqbal was that he not only handled the language with exquisite skill but also made it a medium for expressing the hopes and aspirations of Indian Muslims of my generation. And of his voluminous writings I chose two of the most controversial poems to render into English. I must also admit that when I set out on my voyage of rediscovery of Urdu it was the fiery music of some of the lines of these two poems that rekindled my almost dead love for the language and kept the flame of my interest alive. I have translated these two poems as part-payment of the debt of gratitude I felt I owed to Iqbal for once again offering me the priceless gems of the Urdu language. Reading and re-reading Iqbal has been the most exhilarating experience of the later years of my life.

I subscribe to the view that it is impossible to translate good poetry of one language into another. This is even more true when it comes to translating Oriental verse into a European language. While every language has words and concepts which have no counterparts in others, the Oriental poets often go further in investing words with meanings not recorded in dictionaries. Two examples will suffice. Amongst the commonest currency in Hindi-Urdu love poetry are *joban* (*yauvan* in Hindi) and *angdaee*. The closest that English offers for *joban* is youthfulness. The Hindi-Urdu *joban* is not only youthfulness but specifically the youthfulness of a young girl with burgeoning bosoms. So also *angdaee*.



It means no more than the stretching of limbs as is done by a tired person. But in Hindi-Urdu poetry that stretching of limbs becomes a distinctly amorous gesture.

Besides finding exact English equivalents, when it comes to Urdu, a translator has to content with the institutionalized concepts which the language has borrowed from Persian and Arabic and are liberally used by poets. Thus we have *zahid* (from *zuhd*, pure, for a religious mentor), *vaiz* (from *vaz*, admonishment, for a preacher), *naseh* (adviser) and *qasid* (message bearer, for one who acts as a go-between between lovers). Although dictionaries assign distinct functions to them, in actual usage they often extend their roles. Another character who plays a very prominent part in Urdu poetry is the *saqi* (wine-server). A *saqi*, who can be either male or female, is often also the sweetheart in both the hetero- and homosexual sense. The *bulbul* which in real life only emits an unmusical chirp and shows no preference in its choice of flowers is made into a nightingale (which incidentally sings away all hours of the day as well as night) in order to endow it with a melodious voice and also assumed to address its love-lorn lament to the unresponsive rose. The moth (*parvana*) becomes the exemplar of the ultimate in love because in its passion for the flame (*sham'a*) it happily immolates itself in the fire. Iqbal employed these concepts with abandon. And much more. Since Islam was the dominant theme of much of his poetry there are many allusions to events in the life of the Prophet Muhammad, his companions, the Caliphs and Islamic history. These compel the translator to append explanations in footnotes. The two poems translated here are entirely devoted to contrasting Islam's glorious past with the disintegration of the Islamic empires and the sorry state of Muslim society of later days. I have done my best to avoid footnotes and, where this has not been possible, to make them as brief as possible.

My interest in *Shikwa* was roused when I heard my friend Rafiq Zakaria and his wife Fatma recite passages from the poem to their children. The more the recitations moved me the more inadequate I felt in my capacity to render them in English. It was only after reading the translations of A.J. Arberry and Altaf Hussain that I picked up enough courage to try my hand at the poems. I felt that Arberry's translation had failed to capture the musical resonance of Iqbal's words. And Altaf Husain had taken more liberties with the original than is legitimate for a

translator. I tried to overcome my shortcomings with Urdu vocabulary by consulting dictionaries and badgering anyone I met who knew Urdu with torrents of questions. So it was at dinner and cocktail parties, casual meetings and even on the tennis court as much as in the seclusion of my study that I worked on this translation. It took me over a year to get it in readable shape.

If I were to put down the names of all the people I consulted, it would make a formidable list. I am constrained to name a few whom I troubled with my problems more than others: Satindra Singh of *The Tribune*, Hafeez Noorani and Nasira Sharma for checking the exact meaning of the words; Mujahid Husain of the Embassy of Pakistan for going over every line of my *Shikwa* translation, K.N. Sud, Dr Masud Husain of the Aligarh Muslim University and Dr Aley Ahmed Suroor, Iqbal Professor at the University of Kashmir, for the final revision. For the translation of *Jawab-i-Shikwa* I consulted the poet Ali Sardar Jafri and had it examined for accuracy by Begum Sajida Zaidi of the Aligarh Muslim University before submitting it to Dr Suroor for a second scrutiny. Dr Asad Ali provided the Hindi transliteration. To all these friends I record my gratitude. But it is to Fatma and Rafiq Zakaria that I am most beholden for constantly nagging and prodding me to get on with the job till it was completed. KH. S.

Preface to the Second Impression

It has been very gratifying to learn that the first impression of my translation of *Shikwa* and *Jawab-i-Shikwa* was sold out within six months of its publication. This is no doubt more due to a revival of interest in the poetry of Iqbal than to the quality of my translation, but that I should have in some small measure been instrumental in re-kindling the Allamic flame which had been almost snuffed out in India gives me enormous satisfaction. This reprint also provides me with the opportunity of correcting a few minor errors in the introduction in which I had got some of the names of the members of Iqbal's family and the date of his death wrong. I acknowledge my gratitude to the many critics, notably Abdul Majid of ESCAP, who were kind enough to draw my attention to these errors. By and large Indian critics have been very kind to me. I await with trepidation the reception of my translation in Pakistan.

New Delhi KHUSHWANT SINGH
15 September 1981



Introduction

Iqbal wrote on a variety of subjects and his views changed with the times. It is not therefore wise to try to attach labels to him. To the Indian nationalist he appears a fervent nationalist who wrote, 'Of all the countries in the world, the best is our Hindustan' (*Sarey jahan se accha Hindustan hamara*), exhorted Hindus and Muslims to come together, build new shrines where they could worship together and who regarded every speck of dust of his country as divine. At the same time he considered Indian Muslims to be a people apart from other Indians. And while proclaiming that Islam did not recognize national boundaries, he supported the demand for a separate state for Indian Muslims. At one time Iqbal exhorted the peasantry to rise against its oppressors, uproot the mansions of the rich and set fire to crops which did not provide sustenance for them. At another time he wrote *qaseedas* (eulogies) in praise of kings and princes from whom he received patronage. It could be said that Iqbal sang in many voices: he was a nationalist as well as an internationalist, a Marxist revolutionary as well as a supporter of traditional Muslim values and a pan-Islamist. Iqbal was oblivious of these contradictions. If he was consistent in anything, it was in the quality of his compositions. Whatever he wrote was born of passion and executed with the skill of a master craftsman. Few poets of the world have been able to cram so much erudition and philosophy in verse; and fewer still use words both as colours on an artist's palette to paint pictures as well as deploy them as notes of a lute to create music. He was fired by a creative zeal which could only be explained as divinely inspired. It is no wonder that although a devout Muslim, Iqbal could not resist the temptation to bandy words with God. The poems here translated are only two examples of man the creator questioning the ordinances of the Creator of mankind and the universe.

It would not be correct to explain the various facets of Iqbal's writing



and his inconsistencies as the process of development of his personality. It is best to take what comes as it comes and if it appears to be at variance with something he had said before to shrug one's shoulders, relax and enjoy the poetry. Scholars talk of Iqbal's philosophy as if it were logically developed scheme of values. It is not. His earlier poems breathe a sense of disbelief in the world; like the Hindus he regarded it as an illusion (*maya*) and like them he spoke of the futility of striving. Three years in Europe (1905-1908) brought about a complete reversal in his beliefs. The world became real; life had a purpose to serve; latent in every man was a superman who could be roused to his full height by ceaseless striving to create a better world. This post-European phase has been designed as Iqbal's philosophy of *khudi*. It is yet another word that eludes exact translation. *Khud*, is self; *khudi* could be selfhood. *Khud* could be the ego; *khudi*, the super-ego. As used by Iqbal what comes closest to *khudi* is assertive will-power imbued with moral values. This is apparent from these oft-quoted lines:

Khudi ko kar baland itna
Keh har taqdeer sey pehley
Khuda bandey sey khud poocchey
Bata, 'Teri raza kya hai?'

Endow your will with such power
That at every turn of fate it so be
That God Himself asks of His slave
'What is it that pleases thee?'

What exactly did Iqbal want human beings to strive for? Obviously towards some kind of perfection. But he does not care to spell it out in any detail. It would appear that for man ceaseless striving was not to be for material gains in this world or with an eye on rewards in life hereafter. It was to be utterly selfless and motivated by love for mankind. The word Iqbal uses for this kind of striving is *faqr* from which the word *faqir* is derived. For Iqbal it does not mean beggary but quite the opposite: it means pride in the little that comes from righteous endeavour (*kasb-i-halal*). Thus to Iqbal a man who inherits wealth without

having striven for it is worse than a beggar, while a poor man who works for the good of humanity is truly rich. Iqbal's combination of *khudi* and *faqr* comes close to the Hindu concept of *nishkama karma* (action without expectation of reward) lauded in the Gita. Iqbal writes:

Yaqeen muhkam, amal paiham,
Mohabbat fateh-i-alam;
Jehad-i-zindgani men
Hain yeh mardon kee shamsheeren.

In man's crusade of life these weapons has he:
Conviction that his cause is just;
Resolution to strive till eternity;
Compassion that embraces all humanity.

However, Iqbal did not accept the Hindu belief in predestination and assured man that he could be the master of his fate and make the world what he wanted it to be:

Amal sey zindagi banti hai
Jannat bhi jahannum bhi;
Yeh khaki, apni fitrat men
Na noori hai na nari hai.

'Tis how we act that makes our lives;
We can make it heaven, we can make it hell.
In the clay of which we are made
Neither light nor darkness (of evil) dwells.

Iqbal exhorted people to exploit their latent powers by carefully nurturing them:

Agar khudi ki hifazat karen to ain hayat;
Na karen to sarapa afsoon afsana.

If we nurture our will, life will have purpose;
If we fail to do so, it will be a tale of frustration



from the beginning to the end.

Iqbal would have had little patience with the current obsession with meditation (transcendental or otherwise) to induce peace of mind, because he believed that anything worthwhile only came out of a ceaselessly agitated mind:

Khuda tujhey kisee toofan se ashna kar dey
Keh terey bahar ki maujon me iztirab nahin.

May God bring a storm in your life;
The sea of your life is placid, its waves devoid of tumult.

In the introduction to his Persian work, *Asrar-i-khudi* ('Secrets of the Self'), Iqbal writes: 'Personality is a state of tension and can continue only if the state is maintained. If the state of tension is not maintained relaxation will ensue. Since personality or the state of tension is the most valuable achievement of man, he should see that he does not revert to a state of relaxation. That which tends to maintain the state of tension, tends to make us immortal.'

What was true of the individual Iqbal believed to be equally true of races and communities. According to him the real sign of vitality in races is that their fortunes change everyday:

Nishan yahee hai zamaney men zinda Qaumon ka
Keh subah-o-sham badaltee hain inki taqdeeren.

In every age this alone marks a vibrant race
That every morn and eve its fortunes change.

It is strange that while Iqbal wrote so passionately of the need to struggle he gave the heart more importance than the head, and love a greater role in creativity than reason. In a poem the heart thus addresses the head:

Ilm tujh sey to marfat mujh sey;
Too khuda joo, khuda numa main.





Too makan-o-zaman sey rishta bapa
Tairey sidrah aashna hoon main.

From you comes knowledge, from me ecstasy;
You search for God, I show the way.
You are attached to time and place;
I am the bird that ascends to the seventh heaven.

It was in the temple of love (*dayar-i-ishq*) that Iqbal wanted man to make his place, to create a new world with new dawns and sunsets because there were worlds beyond the stars that we see. Iqbal's concept of the perfect man was thus one who was truthful, compassionate and fearless and one who could face death with equanimity:

Nishan-i-mard-i-momin ba too goyam?
Choon marg ayad, tabassum bar-lab-i-oost

You ask me of the marks of a man of faith?
When death comes to him, he has a smile on his lips.

Iqbal's poetry is largely didactic and exhortative. He hardly if ever bothered to write on the love of a man for a woman, and totally avoided romantic amorousness. He is said to have indulged in pornographic poetry; if he did, it was restricted to private readings to a close circle of friends and has never been published.

The facts of Iqbal's life can be briefly stated. He was born in Sialkot on 9 November1877, the youngest child of a man in the tailoring business, Shaikh Noor Muhammad and his wife, Imam Bibi. The family had been Kashmiri Brahmins and had converted to Islam some generations earlier. Young Muhammad Iqbal was brought up as an orthodox Muslim and early in life taught the Koran and commentaries on the sacred text. He also learnt Persian and later English. As a boy he was keener on sport than on studies and had a passionate love for birds. Nevertheless he finished his school in 1892 winning a scholarship to the Scottish Mission College. He was only fifteen years old when he was married to Karim Bibi. Though the marriage was a *mésalliance*, Karim Bibi bore Iqbal three children. In 1895 (at the age of eighteen) having taken his intermediate



examination, Iqbal joined Government College, Lahore, to study Arabic, English and philosophy. He took his degree two years later in 1899, winning the coveted Gold Medal for outstanding scholastic achievement.

Iqbal had begun to compose verses while still at school. But it was in college at Lahore that he first recited his compositions at various symposia (mushairas) in the old city. He was an instant success. After much persuasion by his friend Shaikh (later Sir) Abdul Qadir he agreed to let his poems be published in the literary magazine *Makhzan*. His fame spread to the Urdu-speaking world. He had already attracted the attention of Professor (later Sir) Thomas Arnold, under whose guidance he took his Master's degree. For three years (1901-1904) he was Reader in Arabic at the Islamia and Government College and also studied law. He took the Provincial Civil Service examination, but was fortunately disqualified on medical grounds.

In 1905 Iqbal proceeded to Europe. He took a degree in philosophy from Cambridge University as well as a doctorate from Munich. Within a few months he had picked up enough German to be able to read, write and converse in the language. He switched to writing in Persian and was avidly read by classical scholars.

Three years' sojourn in Europe brought about many changes in Iqbal's way of life and thinking. He had an affair with Atiya Faizee, a young uninhibited girl from a well-to-do Muslim family of Bombay. Whatever else this involvement did to Iqbal (a married man and father of three children), he recoiled from what might be described as the beginnings of the women's liberation movement: his views of woman's place in society remained those of an orthodox Muslim. A similar contradiction appeared in his view of life. While he retained his admiration for the other-worldiness of Sufi mystics, he rejected their belief in the transitoriness of the world and the unreality of life. While he was nauseated by Western commercialism and acquisitiveness, he lamented the loss of the Muslims' empire and was saddened by the decadence of Islam. It was in these years in Europe that he evolved his belief in the necessity of reinforcing one's will-power (*khudi*). It was to be at once passionate and compassionate, assertive but non-acquisitive. Power and wealth, he believed, were good only if acquired by effort but not if it came through inheritance or effortless windfall of chance. Although he

was undoubtedly influenced by European philosophers like Nietszche and Bergson and there were aspects of the Nietszchean vision of a world dominated by supermen, Iqbal's *khudi* remained closer to the Hindu concept of *nishkama karma*—doing one's duty without expectation of reward—than to the European concept which later found expression in the Nazi theory of the supremacy of the Aryan race. In Europe Iqbal became so convinced that a life of action was far superior to intellectual or poetic pursuit that he toyed with the idea of giving up writing. He was dissuaded from doing so and returned to Lahore to write some of his most powerful poetry, including *Shikwa* ('Complaint') followed a few years later by *Jawab-i-Shikwa* ('Answer to the Plaint').

Domestic happiness continued to elude Iqbal. In 1909 he contracted a second marriage to Sardar Begum, and without consummating the relationship took a third wife Mukhtar Begum. On Mukhtar Begum's death in 1924, he remarried Sardar Begum who bore him a son Javed (b. 1924) and a daughter Munirah (b. 1930). Five years after the daughter's birth, Sardar Begum died leaving Iqbal with the burden of two families including two grieving children.

Iqbal did not make much of a mark as a lawyer, but his fame as a poet reached its pinnacle during World War I and was given official accolade in 1924 by the conferment of a knighthood on him. Two years later Sir Muhammad Iqbal was elected to the Punjab Legislative Council, and in 1931 he was a member of the Muslim delegation to the first Round Table Conference in London. Thereafter politics began to take more and more of his time, and he became involved in a movement for a separate Muslim state. His health also began to deteriorate. Malfunctioning of the kidneys was followed by cataract in the eyes and then a septic throat that made him speechless. He knew his time was limited. A few days before the end he composed a verse in Persian lamenting his own departure. He died during the night of 20 April 1938. The next day he was buried beside the northern wall of the Badshahi Mosque. Since then his grave has become a place of pilgrimage for all lovers of the Urdu language.



Shikwa

'The Complaint' was first recited by Iqbal in 1909 at a gathering of the Anjuman-i-Himayat-i-Islam in Lahore. It created a sensation. It has ever since remained one of his most controversial compositions: as passionately lauded by its many admirers as it has been criticized by others. Though only a few have expressed reservations about its poetic qualities there are many who question its message. While lauding the achievements of Muslim warriors and the civilizing role of Islam, the poet also reveals a not-too-veiled contempt for non-Muslims, particularly Hindus. *Shikwa* may be regarded as the first manifesto of the two-nation theory which was later elaborated in detail by Chaudhari Rahmat Ali and accepted as the basis of the foundation of a separate state for the Muslims (Pakistan) by Mohammad Ali Jinnah. At the time the poem was published, orthodox Muslims also objected to some of the vocabulary used by Iqbal, particularly the use of the word *harjaee* (unfaithful) for God. Iqbal was obviously conscious of this charge against him when four years later he composed *Jawab-i-Shikwa*, supposedly a reply by Allah to his complaint.

The theme of *Shikwa* is the poet's complaint against Allah for having been unfair to the Muslim community. After tendering an apology (stanzas 1 and 2) for the audacity of addressing Allah, the poet goes on to protest that if it had not been for the Muslims the message of the unity of Godhead would not have spread in the world (3) and worshippers of idols and trees would have continued to flourish and different races and religions remained indifferent (4 and 5). It was the Muslims who carried the all-conquering sword of Islam across the African deserts into Europe (6). They did not do so to acquire wealth or domain but only to glorify the name of God (7). They fought against heavy odds (8), but carried everything from Iran to Rome before them (9). Were there any other people in the world save the Muslims who had





thus sold their lives for no cause other than restoring the greatness of God (10)? What greater proof of their dedication to the cause could there be than the fact that even in the midst of a battle Muslims laid aside their arms to turn to Mecca when it was the time to pray! And irrespective of their status in life kings and commoners stood shoulder to shoulder in one line to pray (11)! It was because of this single-minded devotion to God that they were able to extend their conquests to the furthest extremities of the world known to them (12).

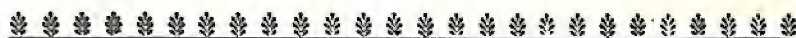
The poet asserts that it was the Muslims who liberated mankind from slavery, maintained the sanctity of the Kaaba and adhered to the injunctions of the Koran. If they could be accused of breach of faith, hadn't Allah also been untrue to them (13)?

The poet laments the decline of Muslim power and the taunts that Muslim-haters fling at them (14 and 15). He is not so much bothered by the fact that infidels enjoy the good things of life; but is piqued by the fact that while infidels get everything here and now, Muslims are promised reward after they are dead (16). He wonders why when Allah's bounty is limitless, Muslims should remain poor (17). Or, why Allah bestows favour on people who do not believe in Him (18). Although Muslims are no longer seen in the mehfils of the Lord (19), they remain as faithful as ever and are surprised that Allah should be angry with them (20). Can it be said that Muslims have forgotten the teachings of the Prophet or abandoned the traditions started by Him and relapsed into worshipping idols (21)?

The Muslim's love for Allah may not be as it was in the days gone by but that is not reason enough for Him to abandon them and turn to strangers (22). They are still made of the stuff that could be ignited by the Eternal Flame (23), and if only God turned His gracious eyes on them, the old passion would be rekindled (24). As it is strangers have the world's garden to themselves while poor Muslims sit forlornly and await His coming (25); they are like withered flowers but could come into bloom again; they are like Moses awaiting the light on Mount Sinai (26).

The poet beseeches the Lord to lighten the burden on Muslims, once again raise them to supreme heights and liberate them from the taint of idolatry (27). The garden of Islam is in a shambles. Only one bulbul (the poet) sings away lost in its own song's rapture (28). While all other birds





have flown away and the trees have shed their leaves, the poet remains immune to changes of the seasons. Alas! if there were someone to listen to his song (29). There is no joy of living except chewing the cud of past memories. Maybe someone will hearken to the poet's melody (30). The poem ends with a note of hope promising a new pact of faith with Allah (31).





کیوں زیاں کار بنوں سود فراموش رہوں؟ فکرِ فردا نہ کروں، محوِ غمِ دوش رہوں
نالے بلبل کے سنوں اور ہمہ تن گوش رہوں ہمنوا! میں بھی کوئی گل ہوں کہ خاموش رہوں؟
جرأت آموز مری تابِ سخن ہے مجھ کو
شکوہ اللہ سے 'خاکم بدہن' ہے مجھ کو

Why must I forever lose, forever forgo profit that is my due,
Sunk in the gloom of evenings past, no plans for the morrow pursue.
Why must I all attentive be to the nightingale's lament,
Friend, am I as dumb as a flower? Must I remain silent?
My theme makes me bold, makes my tongue more eloquent.
Dust be in my mouth, against Allah I make complaint.

क्यों ज़ियाँ-कार बनूं, सूद-फ़रामोश रहूँ?
फ़िक्रे-फ़रदा न करूं, महवे-ग़मे-दोश रहूँ
नाले बुलबुल के सुनूं, और हमातन गोश रहूँ
हम नवा ! मैं भी कोई गुल हूँ कि ख़ामोश रहूँ?
जुर्अत-आमोज़ मिरी ताबे-सुख़न है मुझको
शिक्वा अल्लाह से, ख़ाकम-बदहन, है मुझको



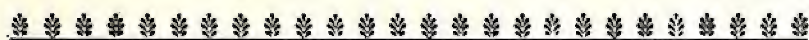


ہے بجا شیوۂ تسلیم میں مشہور ہیں ہم — قصۂ درد سناتے ہیں کہ مجبور ہیں ہم
سازِ خاموش ہیں، فریاد سے معمور ہیں ہم — نالہ آتا ہے اگر لب پہ، تو معذور ہیں ہم
اے خدا! شکوۂ اربابِ وفا بھی سن لے
خوگرِ حمد سے تھوڑا سا گلا بھی سن لے

We won renown for submitting to Your will—and it is so;
We speak out now, we are compelled to repeat our tale of woe.
We are like the silent lute whose chords are full of voice;
When grief wells up to our lips, we speak; we have no choice.
Lord God! We are Your faithful servants, for a while with us bear,
It is in our nature to always praise You, a small plaint also hear.

है बजा शेव-ए-तस्लीम में मशहूर हैं हम
क़िस्स-ए-दर्द सुनाते हैं कि मजबूर हैं हम
साज़े-ख़ामोश हैं, फ़रियाद से मामूर हैं हम
नाला आता है अगर लब पे, तो माज़ूर हैं हम
अय ख़ुदा ! शिक्वा-ए-अरबाबे-वफ़ा भी सुन ले
ख़ूगरे-हम्द से थोड़ा सा गिला भी सुन ले





تھی تو موجود ازل سے ہی تری ذاتِ قدیم　　پھول تھا زیبِ چمن، پر نہ پریشاں تھی شمیم
شرطِ انصاف ہے اے صاحبِ الطافِ عمیم　　بوئے گل پھیلتی کس طرح جو ہوتی نہ نسیم؟
ہم کو جمعیتِ خاطر یہ پریشانی تھی
ورنہ اُمت ترے محبوب کی دیوانی تھی؟

That Your Presence was primal from the beginning of time is true;
The rose also adorned the garden but of its fragrance no one knew.
Justice is all we ask for: You are perfect, You are benevolent.
If there were no breeze, how could the rose have spread its scent?
We Your people were dispersed, no solace could we find,
Or, would Your Beloved's[1] following have gone out of its mind?

थी तो मौजूद अजल से ही तिरी ज़ाते क़दीम
फूल था ज़ेबे चमन, पर न परीशाँ थी शमीम
शर्त इंसाफ़ है ऐ साहिबे अल्ताफ़े अमीम
बूए गुल फैलती किस तरह जो होती न नसीम?
हमको जमीयत ख़ातिर ये परीशानी थी
वरना उम्मत तेरे महबूब की दीवानी थी

[1]The Beloved refers to Prophet Muhammad.



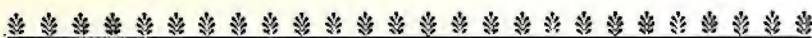


ہم سے پہلے تھا عجب تیرے جہاں کا منظر　　کہیں مسجود تھے پتھر، کہیں معبود شجر
خوگرِ پیکرِ محسوس تھی انساں کی نظر　　مانتا پھر کوئی اَن دیکھے خدا کو کیونکر؟
تجھ کو معلوم ہے لیتا تھا کوئی نام ترا؟
قوتِ بازوئے مسلم نے کیا کام ترا!

Before our time, a strange sight was the world You had made:
Some worshipped stone idols, others bowed to trees and prayed.
Accustomed to believing what they saw, the people's vision wasn't free,
How then could anyone believe in a God he couldn't see?
Do you know of anyone, Lord, who then took Your Name? I ask.
It was the muscle in the Muslim's arms that did Your task.

हमसे पहले था अजब तेरे जहाँ का मंज़र
कहीं मस्जूद थे पत्थर, कहीं माबूद शजर
ख़ूगरे-पैकरे-महसूस थी इंसाँ की नज़र
मानता फिर कोई अनदेखे ख़ुदा को क्यों कर?
तुझको मालूम है लेता था कुई नाम तिरा?
कूवते-बाजु-ए-मुस्लिम ने किया काम तिरा





بس رہے تھے یہیں سلجوق بھی، تورانی بھی　　اہلِ چیں چین میں، ایران میں ساسانی بھی
اسی معمورے میں آباد تھے یونانی بھی　　اسی دنیا میں یہودی بھی تھے، نصرانی بھی
پر ترے نام پہ تلوار اٹھائی کس نے؟
بات جو بگڑی ہوئی تھی، وہ بنائی کس نے؟

Here on this earth were settled the Seljuqs and the Turanians,
The Chinese lived in China, in Iran lived the Sassanians.
The Greeks flourished in their allotted regions,
In this very world lived the Jews and Christians.
But who did draw their swords in Your Name and fight?
When things had gone wrong, who put them right?

बस रहे थे यहीं सलजूक़ भी, तूरानी भी
अहले-चीं, चीन में, ईरान में सासानी भी
इसी मामूरे में आबाद थे यूनानी भी
इसी दुनिया में यहूदी भी थे, नसरानी भी
पर तिरे नाम पे तलवार उठाई किसने?
बात जो बिगड़ी हुई थी, वह बनाई किसने?





تھے ہمیں ایک ترے معرکہ آراؤں میں!　　خشکیوں میں کبھی لڑتے، کبھی دریاؤں میں
دیں اذانیں کبھی یورپ کے کلیساؤں میں　　کبھی افریقہ کے تپتے ہوئے صحراؤں میں
شان آنکھوں میں نہ جچتی تھی جہانداروں کی
کلمہ پڑھتے تھے ہم چھاؤں میں تلواروں کی

Of all the brave warriors, there were none but only we.
Who fought Your battles on land and often on the sea.
Our calls to prayer rang out from the churches of European lands
And floated across Africa's scorching desert sands.
We ruled the world, but regal glories our eyes disdained.
Under the shades of glittering sabres Your creed we proclaimed.

थे हमीं एक तिरे मारिका-आराओं में
ख़ुश्कियों में कभी लड़ते, कभी दरियाओं में
दीं अज़ानें कभी यूरूप के कलीसाओं में
कभी अफ़रीक़ा के तपते हुए सहराओं में
शान आंखों में न जंचती थी जहां-दारों की
कलमा पढ़ते थे हमीं छांव में तलवारों की





ہم جو جیتے تھے تو جنگوں کی مصیبت کے لیے
اور مرتے تھے ترے نام کی عظمت کے لیے
تھی نہ کچھ تیغ زنی اپنی حکومت کے لیے
سر بکف پھرتے تھے کیا دہر میں دولت کے لیے؟
قوم اپنی جو زر و مالِ جہاں پر مرتی
بُت فروشی کے عوض بُت شکنی کیوں کرتی!

All we lived for was to battle; we bore the troubles that came,
And laid down our lives for the glory of Your Name.
We never used our strength to conquer or extend domain,
Would we have played with our lives for nothing but worldly gain?
If our people had run after earth's goods and gold,
Need they have smashed idols, and not idols sold?

हम जो जीते थे, तो जंगों की मुसीबत के लिए
और मरते थे तिरे नाम की अज़मत के लिए
थी न कुछ तेग़ज़नी अपनी हुकूमत के लिए
सर-बकफ़ फिरते थे क्या दहर में दौलत के लिए?
क़ौम अपनी जो ज़रोमाले-जहाँ पे मरती
बुत-फ़रोशी के इवज़ बुत-शिकनी क्यों करती





ٹل نہ سکتے تھے اگر جنگ میں اڑ جاتے تھے
پاؤں شیروں کے بھی میداں سے اکھڑ جاتے تھے
تجھ سے سرکش ہوا کوئی تو بگڑ جاتے تھے
تیغ کیا چیز ہے ہم توپ سے لڑ جاتے تھے
نقش توحید کا ہر دل پہ بٹھایا ہم نے
زیرِ خنجر بھی یہ پیغام سنایا ہم نے

Once in the fray, firm we stood our ground, never did we yield,
The most lion-hearted of our foes reeled back and fled the field.
Those who rose against You, against them we turned our ire,
What cared we for their sabres? We fought against cannon fire.
On every human heart the image of Your oneness we drew,
Beneath the dagger's point, we proclaimed Your message true.

टल न सकते थे, अगर जंग में अड़ जाते थे
पाँव शेरों के भी मैदाँ से उखड़ जाते थे
तुझ से सरकश हुआ कोई, तो बिगड़ जाते थे
तेग़ क्या चीज़ है हम तोप से लड़ जाते थे
नक़्श तौहीद का हर दिल पे बिठाया हमने
जेरे-ख़ंजर भी यह पैग़ाम सुनाया हमने



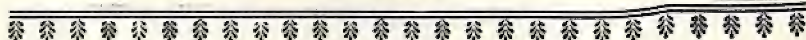


تو ہی کہہ دے کہ اکھاڑا درِ خیبر کس نے؟ شہر قیصر کا جو تھا اس کو کیا سر کس نے؟
توڑے مخلوق خداوندوں کے پیکر کس نے؟ کاٹ کر رکھ دیئے کفار کے لشکر کس نے؟
کس نے ٹھنڈا کیا آتشکدۂ ایراں کو؟
کس نے پھر زندہ کیا تذکرۂ یزداں کو؟

You tell us who were they who pulled down the gates of Khyber?[1]
Who were they that reduced the city that was the pride of Caesar?
Fake gods that men had made, who did break and shatter?
Who routed infidel armies and destroyed them with bloody slaughter?
Who put out and made cold the 'sacred' flame[2] in Iran?
Who retold the story of the one God, Yazdan?

तू ही कह दे कि उखाड़ा दरे-ख़ैबर किसने?
शहर क़ैसर का जो था उसको किया सर किसने?
तोड़े मख़लूक़े-ख़ुदावंद के पैकर किसने?
काट कर रख दिये, कुफ़्फ़ार के लश्कर किसने?
किसने ठंडा किया, आतशकद-ए-ईराँ को?
किसने फिर ज़िंदा किया तज़्किर-ए-यज़्दाँ को?

[1]Khyber was a stronghold of Jewish tribes near Medina and was captured by Hazrat Ali, the Prophet's cousin and son-in-law.
[2]This refers to the sacred flame worshipped by the Zoroastrians of Persia.





کون سی قوم فقط تیری طلب گار ہوئی؟ اور تیرے لیے زحمت کشِ پیکار ہوئی؟
کس کی شمشیر جہانگیر جہاندار ہوئی؟ کس کی تکبیر سے دُنیا تری بیدار ہوئی؟
کس کی ہیبت سے صنم سہمے ہوئے رہتے تھے
منہ کے بل گر کے ھُوَ اللہُ اَحَد کہتے تھے

Who were the people who asked only for You and no other?
And for You did fight battles and travails suffer?
Whose world-conquering swords spread the might over one and all?
Who stirred mankind with Allah-o-Akbar's clarion call?
Whose dread bent stone idols into fearful submission?
They fell on their faces confessing, 'God is One, the Only One!'

कौनसी क़ौम फ़क़त तेरी तलबगार हुई?
और तेरे लिए जहमत-कशे-पैकार हुई?
किसकी शम्शीरे-जहाँगीर जहाँदार हुई?
किसकी तकबीर से दुनिया तिरी बैदार हुई?
किसकी हैबत से सनम सहमे हुए रहते थे
मुंह के बल गिरके हुवल्ला-हो-अहद कहते थे





آگیا عین لڑائی میں اگر وقتِ نماز   قبلہ رو ہو کے زمیں بوس ہوئی قومِ حجاز
ایک ہی صف میں کھڑے ہو گئے محمود و ایاز   نہ کوئی بندہ رہا اور نہ کوئی بندہ نواز
بندہ و صاحب و محتاج و غنی ایک ہوئے!
تیری سرکار میں پہنچے تو سبھی ایک ہوئے!

In the midst of raging battle if the time came to pray,
Hejazis turned to Mecca, kissed the earth and ceased from fray.
Sultan and slave in single file stood side by side,
Then no servant was nor master, nothing did them divide.
Between serf and lord, needy and rich, difference there was none.
When they appeared in Your court, they came as equals and one.

आ गया ऐन लड़ाई में अगर वक़्ते-नमाज़
क़िब्लारु होके ज़मीं-बोस हुई क़ौमे-हिजाज़
एक ही सफ़ में खड़े हो गये महमूद-ओ-अयाज़
न कोई बंदा रहा और न कोई बंदा-नवाज़
बंदा-ओ-साहिबो-मुहताजो-ग़नी एक हुए
तेरी सरकार में पहुँचें तो सभी एक हुए





محفلِ کون و مکاں میں سحر و شام پھرے
مئے توحید کو لیکر صفتِ جام پھرے
کوہ میں، دشت میں لیکر ترا پیغام پھرے
اور معلوم ہے تجھکو کبھی ناکام پھرے؟
دشت تو دشت ہیں، دریا بھی نہ چھوڑے ہم نے!
بحرِ ظلمات میں دوڑا دیئے گھوڑے ہم نے!

In this banquet hall of time and space, from dawn to dusk we spent,
Filled with the wine of faith, like goblets round we went.
Over hills and plains we took Your message; this was our task.
Do you know of an occasion we failed You? is all we ask.
Over wastes and wildernesses of land and sea,
Into the Atlantic Ocean[1] we galloped on our steed.

महफ़िले-कौनोमकाँ में सहरोशाम फिरे
मै-ए-तौहीद को लेकर सिफ़्ते-जाम फिरे
कोह में, दश्त में, लेकर तिरा पैग़ाम फिरे
और मालूम है तुझको, कभी नाकाम फिरे?
दश्त तो दश्त हैं, दरिया भी न छोड़े हमने
बहरे-ज़ुल्मात में दौड़ा दिये घोड़े हमने

[1] *Behr-i-Zulmat*. When Arab conquerors came to the westernmost shores of Africa which they considered the end of the earth, they are said to have exclaimed, 'Great God! Had there been land further we would have conquered it in Your name.'





صفحۂ دہر سے باطل کو مٹایا ہم نے　　نوعِ انساں کو غلامی سے چھڑایا ہم نے
تیرے کعبے کو جبینوں سے بسایا ہم نے　　تیرے قرآں کو سینوں سے لگایا ہم نے
پھر بھی ہم سے یہ گلا ہے کہ وفادار نہیں
ہم وفادار نہیں، تو بھی تو دلدار نہیں!

We blotted out the smear of falsehood from the pages of history,
We freed mankind from the chains of slavery.
The floors of Your Kaaba with our foreheads we swept,
The Koran you sent us we clasped to our breast.
Even so you accuse us of lack of faith on our part:
If we lacked faith, you did little to win our heart.

सफ़हए-दहर से बातिल को मिटाया हमने
नौ-ए-इंसाँ को ग़ुलामी से छुड़ाया हमने
तेरे काबे को जबीनों से बसाया हमने
तेरे क़ुरआन को सीनों से लगाया हमने
फिर भी हम से यह गिला है कि वफ़ादार नहीं
हम वफ़ादार नहीं, तू भी तो दिलदार नहीं

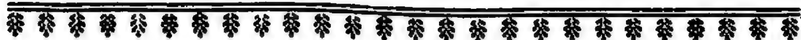




امتیں اور بھی ہیں، ان میں گنہگار بھی ہیں　　عجز والے بھی ہیں، مستِ مے پندار بھی ہیں
ان میں کاہل بھی ہیں، غافل بھی ہیں، ہشیار بھی ہیں　　سینکڑوں ہیں کہ ترے نام سے بیزار بھی ہیں
رحمتیں ہیں تری اغیار کے کاشانوں پر
برق گرتی ہے تو بیچارے مسلمانوں پر!

There are people of other faiths, some of them transgressors.
Some are humble; drunk with the spirit of arrogance are others.
Some are indolent, some ignorant, some endowed with brain,
Hundreds of others there are who even despair of Your Name.
Your blessings are showered on homes of unbelievers, strangers all.
Only on the poor Muslim, Your wrath like lightning falls.

उम्मतें और भी हैं, उनमें गुनाहगार भी हैं
इज्ज वाले भी हैं, मस्ते-मै-ए-पिंदार भी हैं
उनमें काहिल भी हैं, ग़ाफ़िल भी हैं, हुशियार भी हैं
सैंकड़ों हैं कि तिरे नाम से बेज़ार भी हैं
रहमतें हैं तिरी अग़ियार के काशानों पर
बर्क़ गिरती है तो बेचारे मुसलमानों पर



بت صنم خانوں میں کہتے ہیں مسلمان گئے، ہے خوشی ان کو کہ کعبے کے نگہبان گئے
منزلِ دہر سے اونٹوں کے حدی خوان گئے اپنی بغلوں میں دبائے ہوئے قرآں گئے
خندہ زن کفر ہے احساس تجھے ہے کہ نہیں؟
اپنی توحید کا کچھ پاس تجھے ہے کہ نہیں؟

In the temples of idolatry, the idols say, 'The Muslims are gone!'
They rejoice that the guardians of the Kaaba have withdrawn.
From the world's caravanserais singing camel-drivers have vanished;
The Koran tucked under their arms they have departed.
These infidels smirk and snigger at us, are You aware?
For the message of Your oneness, do You anymore care?

बुत सनमख़ानों में कहते हैं मुसलमान गये
है ख़ुशी उनकी कि काबे के निगहबान गये
मंज़िले-दहर से ऊंटों के हुदीख़्वान गये
अपनी बग़लों में दबाये हुए क़ुरआन गये
ख़ंदः ज़न कुफ़्र है, एहसास तुझे है कि नहीं?
अपनी तौहीद का कुछ पास तुझे है कि नहीं?



یہ شکایت نہیں، ہیں اُن کے خزانے معمور　　　نہیں محفل میں جنھیں بات بھی کرنے کا شعور
قہر تو یہ ہے کہ کافر کو ملیں حور و قصور　　　اور بے چارے مسلماں کو فقط وعدۂ حور!
اب وہ الطاف نہیں، ہم پہ عنایات نہیں
بات یہ کیا ہے کہ پہلی سی مدارات نہیں؟

Our complaint is not that they are rich, that their coffers overflow;
They who have no manners and of polite speech nothing know.
What injustice! Here and now are houris and palaces to infidels given;
While the poor Muslim is promised houris only after he goes to heaven.
Neither favour nor kindness is shown towards us anymore;
Where is the affection You showed us in the days of yore?

ये शिकायत नहीं, हैं उनके ख़ज़ाने मामूर
नहीं महफ़िल में जिन्हें बात भी करने का शऊर
क़हृ तो यह है कि काफ़िर को मिलें हूरोक़ुसूर
और बेचारे मुसलमान को फ़क़त वादाए हूर
अब वह अल्ताफ़ नहीं, हम पे इनायात नहीं
बात ये क्या है कि पहली सी मदारात नहीं



کیوں مسلمانوں میں ہے دولتِ دنیا نایاب
تیری قدرت تو ہے وہ جسکی نہ حد ہے نہ حساب
تو جو چاہے تو اٹھے سینۂ صحرا سے حباب
رہروِ دشت ہو سیلی زدۂ موجِ سراب
طعنِ اغیار ہے، رسوائی ہے، ناداری ہے
کیا ترے نام پہ مرنے کا عوض خواری ہے؟

Why amongst Muslims is worldly wealth rarely found?
Great is Your power beyond measure, without bound,
If it were Your will, water would bubble forth from the bosom of arid land,
And the traveller lashed by waves of mirages in the sand.
Our lot is strangers' taunts, ill-repute and penury;
Must disgrace be our lot who gave their lives for You?

क्यों मुसलमानों में है दौलते-दुनिया नायाब
तेरी क़ुदरत तो है वह जिसकी न हद है न हिसाब
तू जो चाहे तो उठे सीन-ए-सहरा से हबाब
रहर-ओ-दश्त हो सेली-ज़दा-ए-मौजे-सराब
तअने अग़यार है, रुस्वाई है, नादारी है
क्या तेरे नाम पे मरने का एवज़ ख़्वारी है?



بنی اغیار کی اب چاہنے والی دُنیا　　رہ گئی اپنے لیے ایک خیالی دُنیا!
ہم تو رخصت ہوئے اوروں نے سنبھالی دُنیا　　پھر نہ کہنا ہوئی توحید سے خالی دُنیا!

ہم تو جیتے ہیں کہ دُنیا میں ترا نام رہے
کہیں ممکن ہے کہ ساقی نہ رہے جام رہے؟

Now on strangers does the world bestow its favours and esteem,
All we have been left with is a phantom world and a dream.
Others have taken over the world, our days are done;
Say not then, 'None in the world believed God there is but one.
All we live for is to hear the world resound with Your name;
How can it be that the *saqi* goes but the goblets remain?

वनी अग़यार की अब चाहने वाली दुनिया
रह गयी अपने लिए एक ख़याली दुनिया
हम तो रुख़सत हुए औरों ने संभाली दुनिया
फिर न कहना हुई तौहीद से खाली दुनिया
हम तो जीते हैं कि दुनिया में तिरा नाम रहे
कहीं मुमकिन है कि साक़ी न रहे जाम रहे?



تیری محفل بھی گئی، چاہنے والے بھی گئے   شب کی آہیں بھی گئیں، صبح کے نالے بھی گئے
دل تجھے دے بھی گئے، اپنا صلہ لے بھی گئے   آکے بیٹھے بھی نہ تھے اور نکالے بھی گئے
آئے عشاق، گئے وعدۂ فردا لے کر
اب انھیں ڈھونڈ چراغِ رخِ زیبا لے کر

Your mehfil is dissolved, those who loved you are also gone:
No sighs through the nights of longing, no lamenting at dawn.
We gave our hearts to You, took the wages You did bestow;
But hardly had we taken our seats, You ordered us to go.
As lovers we came, as lovers departed with promise for tomorrow.
Now search for us with the light that on Your radiant face does glow.

तेरी महफ़िल भी गयी, चाहने वाले भी गये
शब की आहें भी गयीं, सुब्ह के नाले भी गये
दिल तुझे दे भी गये, अपना सिला ले भी गये
आके बैठे भी न थे और निकाले भी गये
आये,उश्शाक़, गये वादाए-फ़र्दा लेकर
अब उन्हें ढूँढ चिराग़े-रुख़े-ज़ेबा लेकर



درد لیلیٰ بھی وہی، قیس کا پہلو بھی وہی　　نجد کے دشت و جبل میں رم آہو بھی وہی

عشق کا دل بھی وہی، حسن کا جادو بھی وہی　　امتِ احمدِ مرسل بھی وہی، تو بھی وہی

پھر یہ آزردگیِ غیرِ سبب کیا معنی؟
اپنے شیداؤں پہ یہ چشمِ غضب کیا معنی؟

Leila's[1] love is as intense, Qais desires her evermore,
On Nejd's hills and dales, the deer swift-footed as before.
The same love beats in the heart, beauty is as bewitching and magical,
Your messenger Ahmed's following still abides, Your presence is eternal.
Neither rhyme nor reason has Your displeasure, what does it mean?
On the faithful is Your angry eye of censure! What does it mean?

दर्दे-लैला भी वही, क़ैस का पहलू भी वही
नज्द के दश्ती-जबल में रमे आहू भी वही
इश्क़ का दिल भी वही, हुस्न का जादू भी वही
उम्मते-अहमदे-मुर्सिल भी वही, तू भी वही
फिर यह आज़ुर्दगी-ए-ग़ैरे सबब क्या मानी?
अपने शैदाओं पे यह चश्मे ग़ज़ब क्या मानी?

[1] This refers to the famous love classic of Leila and Majnun (also known as Qais).





تجھ کو چھوڑا کہ رسولِ عربی کو چھوڑا؟ بت گری پیشہ کیا؟ بت شکنی کو چھوڑا؟
عشق کو، عشق کی آشفتہ سری کو چھوڑا؟ رسمِ سلمانؓ و اویسِ قرنیؓ کو چھوڑا؟
آگ تکبیر کی سینوں میں دبی رکھتے ہیں!
زندگی مثلِ بلالِ حبشیؓ رکھتے ہیں!

Did we abandon You or Your Arab messenger forsake?
Did we trade in making idols? Did we not idols break?
Did we forsake love because of the anguish with which it's fraught?
Give up the traditions of Salman,[1] forget what Ovais Qarani[2] taught?
The flame of Allah's greatness still in our hearts we nourish.
The life of Bilal[3] the Ethiop remains the model that we cherish.

तुझको छोड़ा कि रसूले अरबी को छोड़ा?
बुतगरी पेशा किया ? बुतशिकनी को छोड़ा?
इश्क़ को, इश्क़ की आशुफ्तः सरी को छोड़ा?
रस्मे सलमानो अवैसे क़रनी को छोड़ा?
आग तकबीर की सीनों में दबी रखते हैं
जिदगी मिस्लें विलाले हबशी रखते हैं

[1] Salman Farsi was an Iranian fire-worshipper who was converted to Islam by the Prophet and became a close companion.

[2] Ovais Qarani of Yemen who migrated after the death of the Prophet and is rated amongst his *Tabiyin*-followers.

[3] Bilal, an Abyssinian slave who became a close companion of the Prophet and earned renown for his loud and melodious calls to prayer, *azan*.





عشق کی خیر، وہ پہلی سی ادا بھی نہ سہی　　جادہ پیمائی تسلیم ورضا بھی نہ سہی
مضطرب دل صفتِ قبلہ نما بھی نہ سہی　　اور پابندیِ آئینِ وفا بھی نہ سہی
کبھی ہم سے کبھی غیروں سے شناسائی ہے
بات کہنے کی نہیں تو بھی تو ہرجائی ہے!

Our love may not be what it was, nor told with the same
blandishments;
We may not tread the same path of submission, nor the same way
give consent.
Our hearts are troubled, their compass needles from Mecca may
have swerved,
Perhaps the old laws of faithfulness we may not have fully observed.
But sometimes towards us, at times to others You have affection
shown,
It's not something one should say, You too have not been true to
Your own.

इश्क़ की ख़ैर, वो पहली सी अदा भी न सही
जादापैमाइ-ए-तस्लीमो-रज़ा भी न सही
मुज़्तरिब दिल सिफ़्ते क़िब्लानुमा भी न सही
और पाबंदि-ए-आईने-वफ़ा भी न सही
कभी हमसे, कभी ग़ैरों से शनासाई है
वात कहने की नहीं तू भी तो हरजाई है





سرِ فاراں پہ کیا دین کو کامل تو نے
اک اشارے میں ہزاروں کے لیے دل تو نے
آتش اندوز کیا عشق کا حاصل تو نے
پھونک دی گرمیِ رخسار سے محفل تو نے
آج کیوں سینے ہمارے شرر آباد نہیں؟
ہم وہی سوختہ ساماں ہیں، تجھے یاد نہیں؟

On Faran's[1] summit You gave religion its final shape and form;
With a single gesture You carried a thousand hearts by storm.
You fired with zeal the pursuit of love which was our aim;
The beauty of Your burning cheeks set the entire mehfil aflame.
Why today no sparks smoulder in our bosoms at all?
We are the same inflammable stuff, don't You recall?

सरे फ़ाराँ पे किया दीन को कामिल तूने
इक इशारे में हज़ारों के लिये दिल तूने
आतिश-अंदोज़ किया इश्क़ का हासिल तूने
फूंक दी गरमी-ए-रुख़सार से महफ़िल तूने
आज क्यों सीने हमारे शरर आबाद नहीं?
हम वही सोख़्त:सामाँ हैं, तुझे याद नहीं?

[1] Mountain near Mecca associated with the Prophet Muhammad.





وادیٔ نجد میں وہ شورِ سلاسل نہ رہا   قیسِ دیوانۂ نظارۂ محمل نہ رہا
حوصلے وہ نہ رہے، ہم نہ رہے، دل نہ رہا   گھر یہ اجڑا ہے کہ تو رونقِ محفل نہ رہا
اے خوش آں روز کہ آئی و بصد ناز آئی
بے حجابانہ سوئے محفلِ ما باز آئی!

The valley of Nejd no longer rings with the sound of Qais' chains:
No more is he crazed to glimpse Leila's litter, no more his eyes
he strains.
We have lost the daring of former days, we are not the same,
Our hearts are cold.
You are no longer the spirit of the mehfil, ruin is on our household.
O happy day, return a hundred times with all Your grace!
Drop Your veil and let us gaze upon your lovely face.

वादि-ए-नज्द में वो शोरे सलासिल न रहा
क़ैस दीवाना-ए-नज़ारा-ए-महमिल न रहा
हौसले वो न रहे, हम न रहे दिल न रहा
घर यह उजड़ा है कि तू रौनक़े-महफ़िल न रहा
अय ख़ुशाँ रोज़ कि आई-ओ-वसद नाज आई
बे हिजावाना सु-ए-महफ़िले-मा-बाज़ आई





بادہ کش غیر ہیں گلشن میں لبِ جو بیٹھے　　سنتے ہیں جام بکف نغمۂ کوکو بیٹھے
دور ہنگامۂ گلزار سے یکسو بیٹھے　　تیرے دیوانے بھی ہیں منتظرِ ہو بیٹھے!

اپنے پروانوں کو پھر ذوقِ خود افروزی دے
برقِ دیرینہ کو فرمانِ جگر سوزی دے

Strangers revel in the garden, beside a stream they are sitting;
Wine goblets in their hands, hearing the cuckoo singing.
Far from the garden, far away from its notes of revelry,
Your lovers sit by themselves awaiting the moment to praise You.
Rekindle in Your moths passion to burn themselves on the flame;
Bid the old lightning strike, brand our breasts with Your name.

वादःकश ग़ैर हैं गुलशन में लबेजू बैठे हैं
सुनते हैं जामे बकफ़ नग़मए कू बैठे हैं
दौरे हंगामए गुलज़ार से इकसू बैठे हैं
तेरे दीवाने भी तेरे मुंतज़िरे 'हू' बैठे हैं
अपने परवानों को फिर ज़ौक़े-ख़ुद-अफ़ोज़ी दे
बर्क़े-दैरीना को फ़रमाने-जिगर-सोज़ी दे



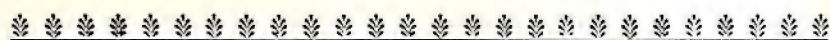


قومِ آوارہ عناں تاب ہے پھر سوئے حجاز　　لے اڑا بلبلِ بے پر کو مذاقِ پرواز
مضطرب باغ کے ہر غنچے میں ہے بوئے نیاز　　تو ذرا چھیڑ تو دے تشنۂ مضراب ہے ساز
نغمے بیتاب ہیں تاروں سے نکلنے کے لیے
طور مضطر ہے اسی آگ میں جلنے کے لیے!

A lost and wandering people towards Hejaz turn their longing eyes,
As a wingless bulbul takes to wing for the love of open skies.
Every bud in the garden longs to bloom to release the fragrance in its body,
So awaits the lute the plectrum, touch its chords, listen to its melody.
Impatient and agitated are notes to burst forth from the strings;
The mountain of Moses trembles eagerly to be ignited by Your lightning.

क़ौम आवारा इनान-ताब है फिर सूए हिजाज़
ले उड़ा बुलबुले बेपर को मज़ाक़े परवाज़
मुज़्तरिब बाग़ के हर ग़ुंचे में है बू-ए-नयाज़
तू ज़रा छेड़ तो दे, तिश्नए-मिज़राब है साज़
नग़मे बेताब हैं तारों से निकलने के लिए
तूर मुज़्तरिब है इसी आग में जलने के लिए



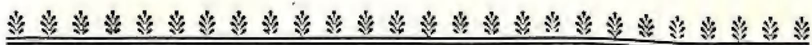


مشکلیں امتِ مرحوم کی آساں کر دے — مورِ بے مایہ کو ہمدوشِ سلیماں کر دے
جنسِ نایابِ محبت کو پھر ارزاں کر دے — ہند کے دیر نشینوں کو مسلماں کر دے
جوئے خوں می چکد از حسرتِ دیرینۂ ما
می تپد نالہ بہ نشتر کدۂ سینۂ ما!

A people You had blessed, lighten the burdens they bear,
Raise the poor down-trodden ant and make it Solomon's peer.
Make abundant that rare commodity love, so that all may buy and sell,
Convert to Islam India's millions who still in temples dwell.
Long have we suffered, see how grief's blood flows down the drain,
From a heart pierced by the scalpel, hear this cry of pain.

मुश्किलें उम्मते मरहूम की आसाँ कर दे
मूर बेमाया को हम-दोशे-सुलेमा कर दे
जिंस-नायाब मुहब्बत को फिर अरज़ाँ कर दे
हिंद के दैर-नशीनों को मुसलमाँ कर दे
जूए-ख़ूँ मी-चकद अज हस्रते-दैरीन-ए-मा
मी तपद नालः ब नश्तरकदा सीन-ए-मा





بوئے گل لے گئی بیرونِ چمن رازِ چمن   کیا قیامت ہے کہ خود پھول ہیں غمّازِ چمن
عہدِ گل ختم ہوا، ٹوٹ گیا سازِ چمن   اڑ گئے ڈالیوں سے زمزمہ پردازِ چمن
ایک بُلبل ہے کہ ہے محوِ ترنّم اب تک
اس کے سینے میں ہے نغموں کا تلاطم اب تک

The scent of the rose stole out, and the garden's secret is betrayed:
What calamity! a flower itself should the traitor's role have played.
The lute of the garden is broken, the season of flowers gone,
Trees' branches are bare, the garden's songsters have flown.
Remains the one bulbul, in its song's raptures lost.
Its breast is full of melodies that are still tempest-tossed.

बू-ए-गुल ले गयी बैरुने-चमन राज़े-चमन
क्या क़यामत है कि ख़ुद फूल हैं ग़म्माज़े-चमन
अहदे-गुल ख़त्म हुआ, टूट गया साज़े-चमन
उड़ गये डालियों से ज़मज़मा-परदाज़े-चमन
एक बुलबुल है कि है महवे-तरन्नुम अब तक
इसके सीने में है नग़मों का तलातुम अब तक





قمریاں شاخِ صنوبر سے گریزاں بھی ہوئیں   پتّیاں پھول کی جھڑ جھڑ کے پریشاں بھی ہوئیں
وہ پُرانی رَوِشیں باغ کی ویراں بھی ہوئیں   ڈالیاں پیرہنِ برگ سے عریاں بھی ہوئیں
قیدِ موسم سے طبیعت رہی آزاد اس کی
کاش گلشن میں سمجھتا کوئی فریاد اس کی!

The ring-doves have left the cypress and from its garden flown;
Flowers have shed their petals which are at random strewn.
The beaten paths of the garden lie desolate and forlorn;
Branches are stripped of leaves that they once had worn.
He alone from the chains of changing seasons remained unbent;
Alas! not one there was in the garden to hear his lament.

क़ुमारियाँ शाख़े-सनोबर से गुरेज़ाँ भी हुईं
पत्तियाँ फूल की झड़-झड़ के परीशाँ भी हुईं
वो पुरानी रविशें बाग़ की वीराँ भी हुईं
डालियाँ पैरहने-बर्ग से उरियाँ भी हुईं
क़ैदे मौसम से तबीयत रही आज़ाद उसकी
काश गुलशन में समझता कोई फ़रयाद उसकी





لطف مرنے میں ہے باقی، نہ مزا جینے میں
کچھ مزا ہے تو یہی خونِ جگر پینے میں!
کتنے بیتاب ہیں جوہر مرے آئینے میں
کس قدر جلوے تڑپتے ہیں مرے سینے میں!
اس گلستاں میں مگر دیکھنے والے ہی نہیں
داغ جو سینے میں رکھتے ہوں وہ لالے ہی نہیں

In giving up our lives there is no gladness, nor is there joy in living;
The only pleasure is in writing verse and in our own heart's
blood drinking.
My mind's mirror is studded with many gems sparkling bright;
In my breast are locked visions aching to burst into light.
But there are none in the garden with eyes to attest;
Not one bleeding tulip bearing a scar within its breast.

लुत्फ़ मरने में है बाक़ी, न मज़ा जीने में
कुछ मज़ा है तो यही ख़ूने-जिगर पीने में
कितने बेताब हैं जौहर मिरे आईने में
किस क़दर जल्वे तड़पते हैं मेरे सीने में
इस गुलिस्तान में मगर देखने वाले ही नहीं
दाग़ जो सीने में रखते हों वो लाले ही नहीं



چاک اس بلبلِ تنہا کی نوا سے دل ہوں   جاگنے والے اسی بانگِ درا سے دل ہوں
یعنی پھر زندہ نئے عہدِ وفا سے دل ہوں   پھر اسی بادۂ دیرینہ کے پیاسے دل ہوں

عجمی خُم ہے تو کیا، مے تو حجازی ہے مری
نغمہ ہندی ہے تو کیا، لے تو حجازی ہے مری

Let the lament of this lonely bulbul pierce the hearts of all,
Arouse the hearts of the sleeping, with this my clarion call.
Transfused with fresh blood, a new compact of faith we'll sign.
Let our hearts thirst again for a sip of the vintage wine.
What if the pitcher be Persian, from Hejaz is the wine I serve.
What if the song be Indian, it is Hejazi in its verve.

चाक इस बुलबुले-तन्हा की नवा से दिल हों
जागने वाले इसी बाँगे-दरा से दिल हों
यानी फिर जिंदा नये अहदे-वफ़ा से दिल हों
फिर इसी बाद-ए-देरीना के प्यासे दिल हों
अजमी ख़ुम है तो क्या, मय तो हिजाज़ी है मिरी
नग़मा हिंदी है तो क्या, लय तो हिजाज़ी है मिरी



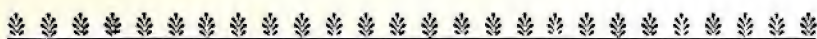
Jawab-i-Shikwa

'The Answer to the Plaint' was first recited by Iqbal in 1913 at a mushaira in Mochi Gate, Lahore. The meeting was organized to raise funds to help the Turks fighting against the Bulgarians. Thousands of copies of the poem were sold and the money forwarded to Constantinople.

It is evident that in composing the reply Iqbal also meant to answer some of the criticism levelled by the orthodox ulema against *Shikwa*, published four years earlier. In the first stanza the poet explains that since his plaint came from the anguish in his heart it was able to rise to the heavens. The next three stanzas embellish the theme of the first stanza in the form of a dialogue between the astral phenomenon ending with Rizwan, the sentinel of paradise, realizing that the voice belonged to a descendant of Adam who had been expelled from Eden. The rest of the poem is devoted to God's reply to Iqbal's plaint.

Allah's reply points out the degradation that has taken place amongst the Muslims who are now divided into different nations, tribes and castes. They have departed from the teachings of the holy Prophet and abandoned the traditions of their ancestors by reverting to idolatry and the worship of tombs. Instead of sticking to the Muslim way of life they have been infected by Western values and the ways of Brahmins. The rich are drunk with power; it is only the poor who gather at the mosques to pray and suffer pangs of hunger during the holy month of Ramadan. Along with the criticism there is an exhortation to the Muslims to return to the ways of their ancestors who had made the name of Islam great by their selflessness, sacrifices, sense of justice and valour. The younger generation of Muslims are singled out for having succumbed to the Western way of life and the charms of urban life. The concluding stanzas exhort Muslims not to lose heart but to look upon adversities (such as the Bulgarian attack on Turkey) as a challenge and





an opportunity to prove their mettle. It ends with the promise that if the Muslims stay faithful to Muhammad, God will once again place the destiny of the world in their hands.



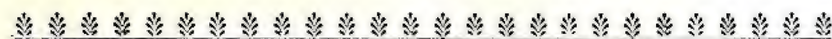


دل سے جو بات نکلتی ہے اثر رکھتی ہے　　پر نہیں طاقتِ پرواز مگر رکھتی ہے
قدسی الاصل ہے رفعت پہ نظر رکھتی ہے　　خاک سے اٹھتی ہے گردوں پہ گزر رکھتی ہے
عشق تھا فتنہ گر و سرکش و چالاک مرا
آسماں چیر گیا نالۂ بیباک مرا

Words spoken from the heart never fail to have effect;
Sacred and pure their origin, on lofty heights their sights are set.
They have no wings and yet they have power to fly;
They rise from the dust and pierce through the sky.
So headstrong and insolent was my love, so much on mischief bent,
So outspoken my plaint, it tore through the firmament.

दिल से जो बात निकलती है असर रखती है
पर नहीं, ताक़ते-परवाज़ मगर रखती है
क़ुदसिउल अस्ल है, रिफ़अत पे नज़र रखती है
ख़ाक से उठती है, गरदूँ पे गुज़र रखती है
इश्क़ था फ़ित्नः गरो सरकशी चालाक मिरा
आसमाँ चीर गया नालः ए बेबाक मिरा





پیرِ گردوں نے کہا سُن کے، کہیں ہے کوئی!　　بولے سیّارے، سرِ عرشِ بریں ہے کوئی!
چاند کہتا تھا، نہیں! اہلِ زمیں ہے کوئی!　　کہکشاں کہتی تھی، پوشیدہ یہیں ہے کوئی!
کچھ جو سمجھا مرے شکوے کو تو رضواں سمجھا
مجھے جنّت سے نکالا ہوا انساں سمجھا!

The aged vault of heaven heard. 'There is someone somewhere,' said he.
The planets spoke, 'Here on these ancient heights someone must be.'
'Not here,' said the moon, 'it must be someone from the earth below.'
Spoke the Milky Way, 'It must be someone hidden here we do not know.'
Only the gatekeeper of Eden did some of my plaint recognize
And understood that I was the man thrown out of paradise.

पीर गरदूँ ने कहा सुनके, कहीं हैं कोई
बोले सय्यारे, सरे अर्शे बरीं है कोई
चाँद कहता था, नहीं , अहले ज़मीं है कोई
कहकशाँ कहती थी, पोशीदा यहीं है कोई
कुछ जो समझा मिरे शिक्वे को तो रिज़वाँ समझा
मुझे जन्नत से निकाला हुआ इंसाँ समझा





تھی فرشتوں کو بھی حیرت کہ یہ آواز ہے کیا　　عرش والوں پہ بھی کھلتا نہیں یہ راز ہے کیا
تا سرِ عرش بھی انساں کی تگ و تاز ہے کیا　　آ گئی خاک کی چٹکی کو بھی پرواز ہے کیا
غافل آداب سے سکانِ زمیں کیسے ہیں!
شوخ و گستاخ یہ پستی کے مکیں کیسے ہیں!

Even to the angels the voice came as a complete surprise;
Nor was the mystery unveiled to other dwellers of the skies.
(They wondered): Could celestial heights have become the aim of man's striving?
Could this pinch of dust have learnt the art of flying?
These earth-dwellers, how little of manners do they know!
How cheeky and insolent are these habitants of regions down below!

थी फ़रिश्तों को भी हैरत कि यह आवाज़ है क्या
अर्शवालों पे भी खुलता नहीं यह राज़ है क्या
ता सरे अर्श भी इंसाँ की तगोताज़ है क्या?
आगई ख़ाक की चुटकी को भी परवाज़ है क्या?
ग़ाफ़िल आदाब से सुक्काने ज़मीं कैसे हैं
शोख़ोगुस्ताख़ ये पस्ती के मकीं कैसे हैं





اس قدر شوخ کہ اللہ سے بھی برہم ہے　　تھا جو مسجودِ ملائک یہ وہی آدم ہے؟
عالمِ کیف ہے، دانائے رموزِ کم ہے　　ہاں، مگر عجز کے اسرار سے نامحرم ہے
ناز ہے طاقتِ گفتار پہ انسانوں کو
بات کرنے کا سلیقہ نہیں نادانوں کو!

He even rails against Allah, he has become so proud;
Is he the same Adam before whom the angels bowed?
He knows about things, their quantity and quality;
Yes, these he knows; but nothing of the secret of humility.
Their power of speech men always proudly flaunt,
But of the way of speaking they are quite ignorant.

इस क़दर शोख़ कि अल्लाह से भी बरहम है
था जो मस्जूदेमलाइक ये वही आदम है
आलमे कैफ़ है, दानाए रमूज़ कम है
हाँ, मगर इज्ज़ के असरार से ना महरम है
नाज़ है ताक़ते गुफ़्तार पे इंसानों को
बात करने का सलीका नहीं नादानों को

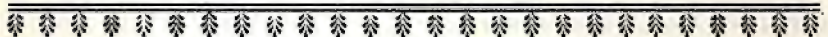




آئی آواز غم انگیز ہے افسانہ ترا　　اشکِ بیتاب سے لبریز ہے پیمانہ ترا
آسماں گیر ہوا نعرۂ مستانہ ترا　　کس قدر شوخ زباں ہے دلِ دیوانہ ترا!
شکر شکوے کو کیا حُسنِ ادا سے تو نے
ہم سخن کر دیا بندوں کو خُدا سے تو نے

Spoke the Voice: 'Your tale is indeed full of sorrow;
Your tears tremble at the brim and are ready to flow.
Your cry of lament the sky has rung;
What cunning your impassioned heart has lent your tongue!
So eloquently did you word your plaint, you made it sound like praise.
To talk on equal terms with Us, man to celestial heights did raise.'

आयी आवाज़ गमअंगेज़ है अफ़साना तिरा
अश्के बेताब से लबरेज़ है पैमाना तिरा
आसमाँ गीर हुआ नारए मस्ताना तिरा
किस क़दर शोख़ ज़बाँ है दिले दिवाना तिरा
शुक्र शिक्वे को किया हुस्ने अदा से तूने
हम सुख़न कर दिया बंदों को ख़ुदा से तूने





ہم تو مائل بہ کرم ہیں، کوئی سائل ہی نہیں   راہ دکھلائیں کسے؟ رہروِ منزل ہی نہیں
تربیت عام تو ہے، جوہرِ قابل ہی نہیں   جس سے تعمیر ہو آدم کی یہ وہ گِل ہی نہیں
کوئی قابل ہو تو ہم شانِ کئی دیتے ہیں
ڈھونڈنے والوں کو دُنیا بھی نئی دیتے ہیں

'Limitless is Our bounty, but none for it will pray.
There's no one on the seeker's path; to whom do We point the way?
Not one proved worthy of the care with which they were raised;
You are not the clay of which another Adam could be made.
If there were one deserving, We'd raise him to regal splendour,
To those who seek, We would unveil a new world of wonder.'

हम तो माइल ब करम हैं, कोई साइल ही नहीं
राह दिखलाएं किसे ? रहरवे मंजिल ही नहीं
तरबियत आम तो है, जौहरे क़ाबिल ही नहीं
जिससे तामीर हो आदम को ये वह गिल ही नहीं
कोई क़ाबिल हो तो हम शाने कई देते हैं
ढूंढनेवालों को दुनिया भी नयी देते हैं





ہاتھ بے زور ہیں، الحاد سے دل خوگر ہیں — امتی باعثِ رسوائیِ پیغمبر ہیں
بت شکن اٹھ گئے، باقی جو رہے بت گر ہیں — تھا براہیم پدر، اور پسر آزر ہیں
بادہ آشام نئے، بادہ نیا، خم بھی نئے
حرمِ کعبہ نیا، بت بھی نئے، تم بھی نئے

'You have no strength in your hands; in your hearts God has no place;
On the name of My messenger, you people have brought disgrace.
Destroyers of false gods are gone; only the idol-maker thrives;
The sons of Abraham have departed, Azar's[1] idolatrous breed survives.
Strange the company you keep; from new vats a new vintage wine you brew;
You have built yourselves a new Kaaba with new idols because you yourselves are new.'

हाथ बेज़ोर हैं, इल्हाद से दिल ख़ूगर हैं
उम्मती बाइसे रुस्वाइए-पैग़ंबर हैं
बुतशिकन उठ गये, बाक़ी जो रहे बुतगर हैं
था ब्राहीम पिदर, और पिसर आज़र हैं
बादः आशाम नये, बादः नया, ख़ुम भी नये
हरम-ए-काबा नया, बुत भी नये, तुम भी नये

[1] Azar, the father of Abraham, was a notorious trader in idols.





وہ بھی دن تھے کہ یہی مایۂ رعنائی تھا!　　نازشِ موسمِ گل لالۂ صحرائی تھا!
جو مسلمان تھا اللہ کا سودائی تھا　　کبھی محبوب تمھارا یہی ہرجائی تھا
کسی یکجائی سے اب عہدِ غلامی کر لو!
ملّتِ احمدِ مرسل کو مقامی کر لو!

'There were days when this very Allah you regarded as sublime;
The tulip of Islam was the pride of the desert in blossom time.
There were days when every Muslim loved the only Allah he knew;
Once upon a time He was your Beloved; the same Beloved you now
call untrue.
Now go and pledge your faith to serve some local deity
And confine Muhammad's following to some one locality.'

वह भी दिन थे कि यही मायए रानाई था
नाजिशे मौसमे गुल लालए सहराई था
जो मुसलमान था अल्लाह का सौदाई था
कभी महबूब तुम्हारा यही हरजाई था
किसी यकजाई से अब अह्दे ग़ुलामी कर लो
मिल्लते अहमदे मुरसिल को मुक़ामी कर लो



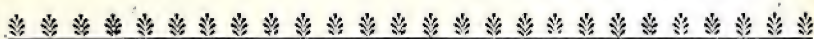


کس قدر تم پہ گراں صبح کی بیداری ہے　　ہم سے کب پیار ہے؟ ہاں نیند تمھیں پیاری ہے
طبعِ آزاد پہ قیدِ رمضاں بھاری ہے　　تمھیں کہہ دو یہی آئینِ وفاداری ہے
قوم مذہب سے ہے، مذہب جو نہیں، تم بھی نہیں
جذبِ باہم جو نہیں، محفلِ انجم بھی نہیں

'Heavy weights the light of dawn, how loth you are to rise?
Why protest you love us? It is your slumber that you prize.
On your carefree spirit Ramadan's fast does heavily press;
Ask yourselves and answer: 'Is this the way of faithfulness?
A people are bound by faith; without faith they cease to be;
If nothing binds you, you are like meteors, not stars in a galaxy.'

किस क़दर तुम पे गराँ सुब्ह की बेदारी है
हमसे कव प्यार है ? हाँ नींद तुम्हें प्यारी है
तब्ए आज़ाद पे, कैदे रमज़ाँ भारी है
तुम्हीं कह दो यही आईने वफ़ादारी है
कौम मज़्हव से है, मज़्हव जो नहीं, तुम भी नहीं
जज़्बे बाहम जो नहीं, महफ़िले अंजुम भी नहीं

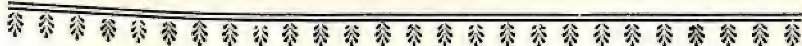




جن کو آتا نہیں دنیا میں کوئی فن، تم ہو　　نہیں جس قوم کو پروائے نشیمن، تم ہو
بجلیاں جس میں ہوں آسودہ وہ خرمن، تم ہو　　بیچ کھاتے ہیں جو اسلاف کے مدفن، تم ہو
ہو نکو نام جو قبروں کی تجارت کر کے
کیا نہ بیچو گے جو مل جائیں صنم پتھر کے؟

'The only people in the world of every skill bereft are you.
The only race which cares not how it fouls its nest are you.
Haystacks that within them conceal the lightning's fires are you.
Who live by selling tombs of their sires are you.
If as traders of tombstones you have earned such renown,
What is there to stop you in trading in gods made of stone?'

जिन को आता नहीं दुनिया में कोई फ़न, तुम हो
नहीं जिस क़ौम को परवा-ए-नशेमन, तुम हो
बिजलियाँ जिसमें हों आसूदा, वह ख़िरमन, तुम हो
बेच खाते हैं जो अस्लाफ़ के मदफ़न, तुम हो
हो निको-नाम जो क़ब्रों की तिजारत करके
क्या न बेचोगे जो मिल जायें सनम पत्थर के?



صفحۂ دہر سے باطل کو مٹایا کس نے؟ نوعِ انساں کو غلامی سے چھڑایا کس نے؟
میرے کعبے کو جبینوں سے بسایا کس نے؟ میرے قرآن کو سینوں سے لگایا کس نے؟
تھے تو آبا وہ تمھارے ہی، مگر تم کیا ہو؟
ہاتھ پر ہاتھ دھرے منتظرِ فردا ہو!

Who blotted out the smear of falsehood from the pages of history?
Who freed mankind from the chains of slavery?
The floors of my Kaaba with whose foreheads swept?
Who were they who clasped my Koran to their breasts?
Your forefathers indeed they were: tell us who are you, we pray?
With idle hands you sit awaiting the dawn of a better day.'

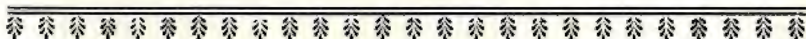
सफ़ह-ए-दहर से बातिल को मिटाया किसने?
नौए इंसाँ को ग़ुलामी से छुड़ाया किसने?
मेरे काबे को जबीनों से बसाया किसने?
मेरे क़ुर्आन को सीनों से लगाया किसने?
थे तो आबा वो तुम्हारे ही, मगर तुम क्या हो?
हाथ पर हाथ धरे मुंतज़िरे फ़र्दा हो



کیا کہا؟ بہرِ مسلماں ہے فقط وعدۂ حور　　شکوہ بیجا بھی کرے کوئی تو لازم ہے شعور!
عدل ہے فاطرِ ہستی کا ازل سے دستور　　مسلم آئیں ہوا کافر تو ملے حور و قصور
تم میں حوروں کا کوئی چاہنے والا ہی نہیں
جلوۂ طور تو موجود ہے موسیٰ ہی نہیں

'Did you say to Muslims we promise houris only in paradise?
One's speech should be polite even if one has reason to criticize.
From time eternal we the Creator made justice our sovereign rule;
To infidels who behaved as Muslims we gave heaven's gifts as prize.
There is not one amongst you who does to heaven's gift aspire;
There is no Moses to see Tor's celestial fire.'

क्या कहा ? बहरे मुसलमान है फ़क़त वाद-ए-हूर
शिक्वा बेजा भी करे कोई तो लाजिम है शऊर
अद्ल है फ़ातिरे-हस्ती का अज़ल से दस्तूर
मुस्लिम आई हुआ काफ़िर तो मिले हूरोक़सूर
तुममें हूरों का कोई चाहने वाला ही नहीं
जत्व-ए-तूर तो मौजूद है, मूसा ही नहीं





منفعت ایک ہے اس قوم کی، نقصان بھی ایک — ایک ہی سب کا نبی، دین بھی، ایمان بھی ایک
حرمِ پاک بھی، اللہ بھی، قرآن بھی ایک — کچھ بڑی بات تھی ہوتے جو مسلمان بھی ایک
فرقہ بندی ہے کہیں اور کہیں ذاتیں ہیں
کیا زمانے میں پنپنے کی یہی باتیں ہیں؟

'You are one people, you share in common your weal and woe.
You have one faith, one creed and to one Prophet allegiance owe.
You have one sacred Kaaba, one God and one holy book, the Koran.
Was it so difficult to unite in one community every single Mussalman?
It is factions at one place; divisions into castes at another.
In these times are these the ways to progress and to prosper?'

मुनफ़अत एक है इस क़ौम की, नुक़सान भी एक
एक ही सब का नबी, दीन भी, ईमान भी एक
हरमेपाक भी, अल्लाह भी, क़ुर्आन भी एक
कुछ बड़ी बात थी होते जो मुसलमान भी एक
फ़िरक़ा-बंदी है कहीं और कहीं ज़ातें हैं।
क्या ज़माने में पनपने की यही बातें हैं ?



کون ہے تارکِ آئینِ رسولِ مختار؟ مصلحت وقت کی ہے کس کے عمل کا معیار؟
کس کی آنکھوں میں سمایا ہے شعارِ اغیار؟ ہو گئی کس کی نگہ طرزِ سلف سے بیزار؟
قلب میں سوز نہیں، روح میں احساس نہیں
کچھ بھی پیغامِ محمدؐ کا تمھیں پاس نہیں!

'Who abandoned Our Chosen Messenger's code and its sanctions?
Who made time-serving the measure of your actions?
Whose eyes have been blinded by alien ways and civilizations?
Who have turned their gaze away from their forefathers' traditions?
Your hearts have no passion, your souls are of spirit bereft,
Of Muhammad's message nothing with you is left.'

कौन है तारिके आईने रसूले मुख़्तार ?
मस्लहत वक़्त की है किसके अमल का मेआर ?
किसकी आँखों में समाया है शआरे अग़यार ?
हो गयी किसकी निगह तर्ज़े सलफ से बेज़ार
क़ल्ब में सोज़ नहीं, रुह में अहसास नहीं
कुछ भी पैग़ामे मुहम्मद का तुम्हें पास नहीं



جا کے ہوتے ہیں مساجد میں صف آرا، تو غریب　　　زحمتِ روزہ جو کرتے ہیں گوارا، تو غریب
نام لیتا ہے اگر کوئی ہمارا، تو غریب　　　پردہ رکھتا ہے اگر کوئی تمھارا، تو غریب

امرا نشۂ دولت میں ہیں غافل ہم سے
زندہ ہے ملّتِ بیضا غربا کے دم سے

'If any there be to crowd the mosques at prayer, it is the poor.
If any observe Ramadan's fast and pangs of hunger suffer, it is the poor.
If any at all there be who still take our name, it is the poor.
If any there are today who cover up your shame, it is the poor.
The rich know us not; they're drunk with the wine of wealth;
The enlightened community survives because of the poor man's breath.'

जाके होते हैं मसाजिद में सफ़-आरा, तो ग़रीब
ज़हमते-रोज़ा जो करते हैं गवारा, तो ग़रीब
नाम लेता है अगर कोई हमारा, तो ग़रीब
परदः रखता अगर कोई तुम्हारा, तो ग़रीब
उमरा नश्श-ए-दौलत में हैं ग़ाफ़िल हमसे
ज़िंदा है मिल्लते-बैज़ा ग़ुरबा के दम से





واعظِ قوم کی وہ پختہ خیالی نہ رہی برق طبعی نہ رہی، شعلہ مقالی نہ رہی
رہ گئی رسمِ اذاں، روحِ بلالی نہ رہی فلسفہ رہ گیا، تلقینِ غزالی نہ رہی
مسجدیں مرثیہ خواں ہیں کہ نمازی نہ رہے
یعنی وہ صاحبِ اوصافِ حجازی نہ رہے

'Your mentors are immature: there's no substance in what they preach;
No lightning flashes enlighten their minds. There's no fire in their speech.
Only a ritual the call to prayer; the spirit of Bilal has fled.
There's no end to philosophizing; Ghazali's[1] discourse remains unread.
Now mourn the empty mosques. No worshippers fill them with prayer.
The likes of noble Hejazi gentlemen are no longer there.'

वाइज़े-क़ौम की वो पुख़्ता-ख़्याली न रही
बर्क़-तबई न रही, शोला-मक़ामी न रही
रह गयी रस्मे-अज़ाँ, रूहे-बिलाली न रही
फ़लसफ़ा रह गया, तल्क़ीने-ग़ज़ाली न रही
मस्जिदें मरसिया ख़्वाँ हैं कि नमाज़ी न रहे
यानी वह साहिबे-औसाफ़े-हजाज़ी न रहे

[1] Al Ghazali (d.A.D. 1111), mystic theologian of Islam, and author of *Tahafat-al-Falasifa* ('The Incoherence of Philosophers').





شور ہے ہو گئے دنیا سے مسلماں نابود　　ہم یہ کہتے ہیں کہ تھے بھی کہیں مسلم موجود؟
وضع میں تم ہو نصاریٰ، تو تمدن میں ہنود　　یہ مسلماں ہیں! جنھیں دیکھ کے شرمائیں یہود
یوں تو سیّد بھی ہو، مرزا بھی ہو، افغان بھی ہو
تم سبھی کچھ ہو، بتاؤ تو مسلمان بھی ہو

'There is loud talk that Muslims have disappeared from the earth's face.
We ask you; did true Muslims exist anywhere in any place?
Your style of living is Christian, your culture that of the Hindu;
A Jew would be ashamed if he saw Muslims such as you.
You are Saiyyads as well as Mirzas, and you are Afghans—
You are all these, but tell us are you also Mussalmans?'

शोर है हो गये दुनिया से मुसलमाँ नाबूद
हम यह कहते हैं कि थे भी कहीं मुस्लिम मौजूद
वज़अ में तुम हो नसारा, तो तमद्दुन में हनूद
यह मुसलमाँ हैं जिन्हें देख के शरमायें यहूद
यूँ तो सैयद भी हो, मिर्ज़ा भी हो, अफ़गान भी हो
तुम सभी कुछ हो, बताओ तो मुसलमान भी हो





دمِ تقریر تھی مسلم کی صداقت بیباک   عدل اس کا تھا قوی، لوثِ مراعات سے پاک
شجرِ فطرتِ مسلم تھا حیا سے نمناک   تھا شجاعت میں وہ اک ہستیِ فوق الادراک
خود گدازی نمِ کیفیتِ صہبایش بود
خالی از خویش شدن صورتِ مینایش بود

'When a Muslim spoke, he spoke the truth; his speech was forthright;
Strong was his sense of justice, no bias did his judgement blight.
As sap is in a tree, so was modesty in the Muslim nature;
Rare was his courage, his valour was beyond compare.
His self-effacement was the essence as liquid contents are of liquor,
As a goblet empties out, emptying himself for others was his pleasure.'

दमे तक़रीर थी मुस्लिम की सदाक़त बेबाक
अद्ल उसका था क़वी, लौसोमराआत से पाक
शजरोफितरते मुस्लिम था हया से नमनाक
था शुजाअत में वह इक हस्तीए फ़ौक़ुल इदराक
ख़ुद गुज़ारी नमे कैफ़ियते सबायश बूद
ख़ाली अज़ ख़ेश शुदन सूरते मीनायश बूद





ہر مسلماں رگِ باطل کے لیے نشتر تھا
اس کے آئینۂ ہستی میں عمل جوہر تھا
جو بھروسا تھا اسے قوتِ بازو پر تھا
ہے تمھیں موت کا ڈر، اس کو خدا کا ڈر تھا
باپ کا علم نہ بیٹے کو اگر ازبر ہو
پھر پسر قابلِ میراثِ پدر کیونکر ہو!

'To every vein of falsehood, every Muslim was a knife;
In his life's mirror, the jewel was ceaseless strife.
On the strength of his own arms a Muslim used to rely;
All he feared was his God; all you fear is to die.
If from his father's learning, a son takes no light,
Over his sire's legacy, how can he stake his right!'

हर मुसलमाँ रगे-बातिल के लिए नशतर था
उसके आईन-ए-हस्ती में अमल जौहर था
जो भरोसा था उसे कूव्वते-बाज़ू पर था
है तुम्हें मौत का डर, उसको ख़ुदा का डर था
वाप का इल्म न बेटे को अगर अजबर हो
फिर पिसर क़ाबिल-मीरासे-पिदर क्योंकर हो





ہر کوئی مست مئے ذوقِ تن آسانی ہے تم مسلماں ہو؟ یہ اندازِ مسلمانی ہے؟
حیدری فقر ہے، نے دولتِ عثمانی ہے تم کو اسلاف سے کیا نسبتِ روحانی ہے؟
وہ زمانے میں معزز تھے مسلماں ہو کر
اور تم خوار ہوئے تارکِ قرآں ہو کر

'All of you drink the wine of bodily indulgence, lead lives of ease
without strife.
You dare to call yourselves Muslims? Is this the Mussalman's way
of life?
You take neither Ali's[1] pledge of poverty, nor Osman's[2] path of
wealth pursue;
What kinship of the soul can there be between your ancestors and you?
As Muslims your forefathers were respected;
You gave up the Koran and are by the world rejected.'

हर कोई मस्त मए ज़ौक़े-तन आसानी है
तुम मुसलमान हो ? यह अंदाज़े मुसलमानी है ?
हैदरी फ़क्र है, न दौलते उस्मानी है
तुम को असलाफ़ से क्या निस्बते रुहानी है ?
वो जमाने में मोअज़्ज़िज थे मुसलमाँ होकर
और तुम ख़्वार हुए तारिके कुर्आं होकर

[1] Ali, cousin and son-in-law of the Prophet, was the fourth caliph and was renowned for his Spartan way of living.

[2] Osman, or Othman, the third caliph during whose caliphate Muslim armies conquered vast domains and filled the treasuries of Islam.





تم ہو آپس میں غضبناک، وہ آپس میں رحیم — تم خطاکار و خطابیں، وہ خطاپوش و کریم
چاہتے سب ہیں کہ ہوں اوجِ ثریا پہ مقیم — پہلے ویسا کوئی پیدا تو کرے قلبِ سلیم!
تختِ فغفور بھی ان کا تھا، سریرِ کے بھی
یوں ہی باتیں ہیں کہ تم میں وہ حمیت ہے بھی؟

'You always quarrel among yourselves; they were kind and understanding.
You do evil deeds, find faults in others; they covered others' sins and were forgiving.
To live atop the Pleiades is the heart's wish of everyone of you;
First produce a discerning soul who can make the dream come true.
Theirs was the throne of Persia, theirs the kingdom of Cathay
Are you made of that honest stuff or of empty words? You say.'

तुम हो आपस में ग़ज़बनाक, वो आपस में रहीम
तुम ख़ताकारो ख़ताबीं, वह ख़तापाशो करीम
चाहते सब हैं कि हों औजे सुरैया पे मुक़ीम
पहले वैसा कोई पैदा तो करे क़ल्बे सलीम
तख़्ते फ़गफ़ूर भी उनका था, सरीर के भी
यों ही बातें हैं कि तुममें वह हमीयत है भी





خودکشی شیوہ تمھارا، وہ غیور و خوددار　　تم اخوت سے گریزاں، وہ اخوت پہ نثار
تم ہو گفتار سراپا، وہ سراپا کردار　　تم ترستے ہو کلی کو، وہ گلستاں بکنار

اب تلک یاد ہے قوموں کو حکایت ان کی
نقش ہے صفحۂ ہستی پہ صداقت ان کی:

'You are bent on self-destruction; for honour and self-respect they were known.
Brotherly feelings are alien to you; for brothers' lives they gave their own.
All you do is talk and talk; they were men of action, deeds and power;
You hanker after little buds; theirs was the garden and every flower.
To this day the peoples of the world remember tales of their glory;
Their righteous deeds are written on the scrolls of history.'

ख़ुदकशी शेवा तुम्हारा, वो ग़य्यूरो ख़ुददार
तुम अख़ूवत से गुरेज़ाँ, वो अख़ूवत पे निसार
तुम हो गुफ़्तारे सरापा, वो सरापा किरदार
तुम तरसते हो कली को, वो गुलिस्ताँ ब-किनार
अब तलक याद है कौमों को हिकायत उनकी
नक़्श है सफ़ए हस्ती पे सदाक़त उनकी





مثلِ انجم افقِ قوم پہ روشن بھی ہوئے
بتِ ہندی کی محبت میں برہمن بھی ہوئے
شوقِ پرواز میں مہجورِ نشیمن بھی ہوئے
بے عمل تھے ہی جواں دین سے بدظن بھی ہوئے
ان کو تہذیب نے ہر بند سے آزاد کیا
لا کے کعبے سے صنم خانے میں آباد کیا

'What if you rose above the horizon and shone like stars in the heavens!
You fell in love with India's idols and were converted into Brahmins.
Your spirit of adventure made you leave your nest and take to the open sky;
Your youth which had no scruples went further and their faith did deny.
The new civilization removed all restraints and set them wildly free;
It brought them out of the Kaaba to settle in the house of idolatry.'

मिस्ले अंजुम उफ़क़े क़ौम पे रौशन भी हुए
बुते हिंदी की मुहब्बत में ब्रेहमन भी हुए
शौक़े परवाज़ में महजूरे नशेमन भी हुए
बेअमल थे ही जवाँ दीन से बद ज़न भी हुए
उनको तहज़ीब ने हर बंद से आज़ाद किया
लाके काबे से सनमख़ाने में आबाद किया





قیس زحمت کشِ تنہائیِ صحرا نہ رہے — شہر کی کھائے ہوا، بادیہ پیما نہ رہے
وہ تو دیوانہ ہے، بستی میں رہے یا نہ رہے — یہ ضروری ہے حجابِ رخِ لیلا نہ رہے
گلۂ جور نہ ہو، شکوۂ بیداد نہ ہو
عشق آزاد ہے، کیوں حسن بھی آزاد نہ ہو

'Today's lovers are not like Qais[1]; they cannot bear the loneliness of desert wastes;
They have breathed the city's airs; for desert wines they have no taste.
Qais is crazed with love; he may or may not choose the city as his dwelling place:
But there is no reason why Leila should not raise her veil and show her lovely face.
Enough of protesting against the cruelty; enough of complaining against tyranny;
If love can wander freely, why should beauty be not set free?'

क़ैस जहमत कशे तनहाई-ए-सहरा न रहे
शहर की खाये हवा, बादियापैमाँ न रहे
वह तो दीवाना है, मस्ती में रहे या न रहे
यह जरूरी है, हिजाबे रुख़े लैला न रहे
गिल: ए-जौर न हो, शिक्वा-ए-बेदाद न हो
इश्क़ आजाद है, क्यों हुस्न भी आजाद न हो

[1] Qais, more popularly known as Majnun, spent his lifetime seeking his beloved Leila.



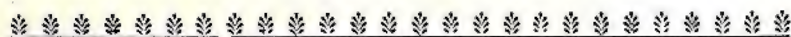


عہدِ نو برق ہے آتش زنِ ہر خرمن ہے ایمن اس سے کوئی صحرا نہ کوئی گلشن ہے
اس نئی آگ کا اقوامِ کہن ایندھن ہے ملتِ ختمِ رسل شعلہ بہ پیراہن ہے
آج بھی ہو جو براہیم کا ایماں پیدا
آگ کر سکتی ہے اندازِ گلستاں پیدا

'The new age is like lightning; inflammatory is every haystack,
Neither wilderness nor garden is immune from its attack.
To this new flame old nations are like faggots on a pyre;
Followers of the last Messenger are consumed in its fire.
Even today if Abraham's faith could be made to glow;
Out of Nimrod's fire a garden of flowers would grow.'

अहदे नौ बर्क़ है, आतिशजन हर ख़िरमन है
ऐमन इससे कोई सहरा न कोई गुलशन है
इस नयी आग का अक़वामे कुहन ईंधन है
मिल्लते ख़त्मे रुसुल शोला ब पैरहन है
आज भी हो जो ब्राहीम का ईमाँ पैदा
आग कर सकती है अंदाज़ेगुलिस्ताँ पैदा





دیکھ کر رنگِ چمن ہو نہ پریشاں مالی　　کوکبِ غنچہ سے شاخیں ہیں چمکنے والی
خس و خاشاک سے ہوتا ہے گلستاں خالی　　گُل بر انداز ہے خونِ شہدا کی لالی
رنگ گردوں کا ذرا دیکھ تو عنابی ہے
یہ نکلتے ہوئے سورج کی اُفق تابی ہے!

'Let not the sorry plight of the garden upset the gardener;
Soon buds will sprout on the branches and like stars glitter.
Weeds and brambles will be swept out of the garden with a broom;
And where martyrs' blood was shed red roses shall bloom.
Look, how russet hues have tinged the eastern skies!
The horizon heralds the birth of a new sun about to rise.'

देखकर रंग-ए-चमन हो न परेशाँ माली
कौकबे गुंचः से शाख़ें हैं चमकने वाली
ख़सो ख़ाशाक से होता गुलिस्ताँ खाली
गुलबर अंदाज़ है खूने शुहदा की लाली
रंग गर्दूं का ज़रा देख तो उन्नाबी है
ये निकलते हुए सूरज की उफ़क़ताबी है



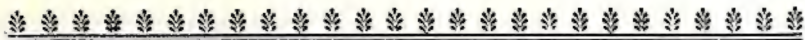


امتیں گلشنِ ہستی میں ثمر چیدہ بھی ہیں   اور محرومِ ثمر بھی ہیں، خزاں دیدہ بھی ہیں
سیکڑوں نخل ہیں، کاہیدہ بھی، بالیدہ بھی ہیں   سیکڑوں بطنِ چمن میں ابھی پوشیدہ بھی ہیں
نخلِ اسلام نمونہ ہے برومندی کا
پھل ہے یہ سیکڑوں صدیوں کی چمن بندی کا

'In life's garden are nations which gathered fruits for which they toiled;
Others which reaped nothing or whose harvest an early autumn spoiled.
Countless plants wither; countless such as remain forever green;
Countless more that are hid in the earth's womb and are yet to be seen.
Islam is an example of a tree cultivated with great care,
Centuries of careful gardening have yielded the fruit it bears.'

उम्मतें गुलशने हस्ती में समरचीद: भी हैं
और महरूमे समर भी हैं, ख़िज़ाँदीद: भी हैं
सैंकड़ों नख़्ल हैं, काहीद: भी हैं बालीद: भी हैं
सैंकड़ों बत्न चमन में अभी पोशीद: भी हैं
नख़्ल इस्लाम नमूना है बुरद मंदी का
फल है ये सैंकड़ों सदियों की चमन बंदी का





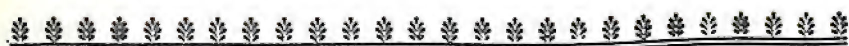
پاک ہے گردِ وطن سے سرِ داماں تیرا   تو وہ یوسف ہے کہ ہر مصر ہے کنعاں تیرا
قافلہ ہو نہ سکے گا کبھی ویراں تیرا   غیر یک بانگِ درا کچھ نہیں ساماں تیرا

نخلِ شمع استی و در شعلہ دود ریشۂ تو
عاقبت سوز بود سایۂ اندیشۂ تو

Your garments are not soiled by the dust of any single native land,
You are the Joseph who sees his Canaan in every Egyptian sand.
Never will your caravan be plundered or laid waste,
You have no baggage save the starting bell. Make haste!
A tree of candles are you, your wick-like roots pierce the light;
Your thoughts are flames that dispel tomorrow's shades and make
them bright.'

पाक है गर्देवतन से सरेदामाँ तेरा
तू वह यूसुफ़ है कि हर मिस्र है कनआँ तेरा
क़ाफ़ला हो न सकेगा कभी वीराँ तेरा
ग़ैर यक बांगे दरा कुछ नहीं सामाँ तेरा
नख़्ले शमा अस्ती ब दर शोला दवद रीशाए तू
आक़ेबत सोज़ बवद साय: ए अंदेशा-ए तू





تو نہ مٹ جائے گا ایران کے مٹ جانے سے
نشۂ مے کو تعلق نہیں پیمانے سے
ہے عیاں یورش تاتار کے افسانے سے
پاسباں مل گئے کعبے کو صنم خانے سے
کشتیٔ حق کا زمانے میں سہارا تو ہے
عصرِ نو رات ہے دھندلا سا ستارا تو ہے

'You will not be destroyed even if Iran went into decline;
The shape of a goblet bears not on the headiness of the wine.
From the tales of the Tartar hordes[1] we can clearly see
That Kaaba got its caretakers from the temples of idolatry.
The bark of truth is launched on the sea of time; its helmsman are you;
In the darkness of the new age, the faint glimmer of your star comes through.'

तू न मिट जायेगा ईरान के मिट जाने से
नशाए मै को ताल्लुक़ नहीं पैमाने से
है अयाँ यूरिशे तातार के अफ़साने से
पासबाँ मिल गये काबे को सनमख़ाने से
कश्तिए हक़ का जमाने में सहारा तू है
अस्रे नौ रात है, धुंधला सा सितारा तू है

[1]The Tartars who after ravaging Muslim lands accepted conversion to Islam and became zealous guardians of Mecca.





ہے جو ہنگامہ بپا یورشِ بلغاری کا　　غافلوں کے لیے پیغام ہے بیداری کا
تو سمجھتا ہے، یہ ساماں ہے دل آزاری کا　　امتحاں ہے ترے ایثار کا، خودداری کا
کیوں ہراساں ہے صہیلِ فرسِ اعدا سے
نورِ حق بجھ نہ سکے گا نفسِ اعدا سے

'The tumult caused by the Bulgar[1] onslaught and aggression
Is to rouse you out of complacency and gird your loins for action.
Presume not that to hurt your feelings, it is a sinister device;
It is a challenge to your self-respect, it is a call to sacrifice.
Why tremble at the snorting of the chargers of your foes?
The flame of truth is not snuffed out by the breath the enemy blows.'

है जो हंगामा बपा यूरिशे यल्ग़ारी का
ग़ाफ़िलों के लिए पैग़ाम है बेदारी का
तू समझता है, ये सामाँ है दिलआज़ारी का
इम्तिहाँ है तेरे ईसार का, ख़ुददारी का
क्यों हिरासाँ है सहीले फ़रसे आदा से
नूरे हक़ बुझ न सकेगा नफ़्से आदा से

[1] This refers to the Bulgarian invasion of Turkey in the autumn of 1912.





چشمِ اقوام سے مخفی ہے حقیقت تیری ہے ابھی محفلِ ہستی کو ضرورت تیری
زندہ رکھتی ہے زمانے کو حرارت تیری کوکبِ قسمتِ امکاں ہے خلافت تیری
وقتِ فرصت ہے کہاں کام ابھی باقی ہے
نورِ توحید کا اتمام ابھی باقی ہے

'Your real worth is hid, other people are yet to see what's true;
The Lord of the world's assembly has yet much need of you.
By your breath lives the world and is kept animate;
You are its destined leader, you the star of fate.
There is no time to relax, much still remains to be done;
You have yet to fully spread the light of God, the only one.'

चश्मे अक़्वाम से मख़फ़ी है हक़ीक़त तेरी
है अभी महफ़िले हस्ती को जरूरत तेरी
जिंद: रखती है जमाने को हरारत तेरी
कौकबे क़िस्मते इमकाँ है ख़िलाफ़त तेरी
वक़्ते फ़ुरसत है कहाँ काम अभी बाक़ी है
नूरे तौहीद का इत्माम अभी बाक़ी है





مثلِ بُو قید ہے غنچے میں، پریشاں ہو جا   رخت بر دوش ہوائے چمنستاں ہو جا
ہے تنک مایہ تو ذرّے سے بیاباں ہو جا   نغمۂ موج سے ہنگامۂ طوفاں ہو جا
قوّتِ عشق سے ہر پست کو بالا کر دے
دہر میں اسمِ محمدؐ سے اُجالا کر دے

'You are the bud's captive fragrance; burst forth and gain release;
Hoist your pack on your shoulder; scatter incense like the garden breeze.
You are but a tiny speck; to infinite vastness let it increase;
You are only the wave's murmur; turn it to the roar of the raging sea.
With the power of love raise the lowest to triumphant heights
With the name of Muhammad turn the world's darkness to light.'

मिस्ले बू क़ैद है, ग़ुंचे में, परीशाँ होजा
रख़्त बरदोश हवाए चमनिस्ताँ होजा
है तुनक माय: तू ज़र्रे से बयाबाँ होजा
नग़म: ए मौज से हंगाम: ए तूफ़ाँ हो जा
क़ुव्वते इश्क़ से हर पस्त को बाला करदे
दहर में इस्मे मुहम्मद से उजाला कर दे





ہو نہ یہ پھول، تو بلبل کا ترنم بھی نہ ہو　　چمنِ دہر میں کلیوں کا تبسم بھی نہ ہو
یہ نہ ساقی ہو تو پھر مے بھی نہ ہو، خم بھی نہ ہو　　بزمِ توحید بھی دُنیا میں نہ ہو، تم بھی نہ ہو
خیمہ افلاک کا استادہ اسی نام سے ہے
نبضِ ہستی تپش آمادہ اسی نام سے ہے

'If he were not the flower, no bird song would you hear;
The gardens of the world, no smiling buds would bear.
If he were not the *saqi*, neither wine nor pitcher would there be,
Neither gatherings of true believers of the world nor will you have identity.
His name is the tent-pole that the canopy of heaven sustains,
His name makes the pulse of life beat warmly in our veins.'

हो न यह फूल, तो बुलबुल का तरन्नुम भी न हो
चमन-ए-दहर में, कलियों का तवस्सुम भी न हो
यह न साक़ी हो तो फिर मैं भी न हो, ख़ुम भी न हो
वज़्मे तौहीद भी दुनिया में न हो, तुम भी न हो
ख़ेमा अफ़लाक का इस्तादा इसी नाम से है
नब्ज़े-हस्ती तपिश-आमादा इसी नाम से है



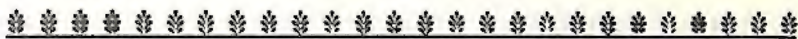


دشت میں دامنِ کہسار میں میدان میں ہے　　بحر میں موج کی آغوش میں طوفان میں ہے
چین کے شہر، مراقش کے بیابان میں ہے　　اور پوشیدہ مسلمان کے ایمان میں ہے
چشمِ اقوام یہ نظارہ ابد تک دیکھے
رفعتِ شانِ رَفَعنَا لَکَ ذِکرَک دیکھے

'He is on arid wastes and on mountain sides and on endless steppes;
He dwells by the ocean's swell that's tossed by the stormy seas.
He is in the cities of Cathay and in wildernesses Moroccan
And he lies hidden in the faith of every Muslim man.
May every eye see this spectacle to the very end of time
And testify to our saying, "We have made your name sublime."'

दश्त में, दामाने कोहसार में, मैदाँ में है
बहर में, मौज की आग़ोश में, तूफ़ाँ में है
चीन के शहर, मराक़श के बयाबाँ में है
और पोशीदा मुसलमान के ईमान में है
चश्मे अक़वाम ये नज़ारा अबद तक देखे
रिफ़अते शाने रफ़अना लकाज़िकरक देखे





مردمِ چشمِ زمیں یعنی وہ کالی دنیا   وہ تمھارے شہدا پالنے والی دنیا
گرمیِ مہر کی پروردہ، ہلالی دنیا   عشق والے جسے کہتے ہیں بلالی دنیا

تپش اندوز ہے اس نام سے پارے کی طرح
غوطہ زن نور میں ہے آنکھ کے تارے کی طرح

'In the land of the Blacks—pupil in the eye of the earth—
The land which nurtured martyrs, the land of their birth.
Land of the fertile crescent made fruitful by the heat of the sun,
The land known to lovers of the faith as the land of Bilal,
 the Abyssinian.
It shimmers like quicksilver at the sound of His name,
As the sparkle in a dark eye; in pitch black it is a flame.'

मर्दुमे चश्म ज़मीं, यानी वह काली दुनिया
वह तुम्हारे शोहदा पालने वाली दुनिया
गर्मी महर की परवरदः, हिलाली दुनिया
इश्क़वाले जिसे कहते हैं बिलाली दुनिया
तपिश अंदोज है इस नाम से पारे की तरह
ग़ोतः जन नूर में है आँख के तारे की तरह





عقل ہے تیری سپر عشق ہے شمشیر تری　　مرے درویش! خلافت ہے جہانگیر تری
ما سوا اللہ کے لیے آگ ہے تکبیر تری　　تو مسلماں ہو تو تقدیر ہے تدبیر تری
کی محمدؐ سے وفا تو نے تو ہم تیرے ہیں
یہ جہاں چیز ہے کیا لوح و قلم تیرے ہیں

'With reason as your shield and the sword of love in your hand,
Servant of God! the leadership of the world is at your command.
The cry, "Allah-o-Akbar", destroys all except God; it is a fire.
If you are true Muslims, your destiny is to grasp what you aspire.
If you break not faith with Muhammad, we shall always be with you;
What is this miserable world? To write the world's history, pen and
tablet we offer you.

अक़्ल है तेरी सिपर, इश्क़ है शमशीर तिरी
मिरे दरवेश! ख़िलाफ़त है जहाँगीर तिरी
मा सिवा अल्लाह के लिए आग है तकबीर तिरी
तू मुसलमाँ हो तो तक़दीर है तदबीर तिरी
की मुहम्मद से वफ़ा तूने तो हम तेरे हैं
यह जहाँ चीज है क्या, लौह-ओ-क़लम तेरे हैं





From reviews of
Shikwa and *Jawab-i-Shikwa*

I have read the translation of *Shikwa* and *Jawab-i-Shikwa* with great pleasure. You have captured the spirit of the original without making it your own composition...
M. Hidayatullah, Vice-President of India, in a letter to the translator.

I have not read a better translation of Iqbal's *Shikwa* and *Jawab-i-Shikwa*. Khushwant Singh's attempt is definitely an achievement.... It is a gift to readers who do not know Urdu, and are interested in Iqbal and his poetry.
Ali Sardar Jafri in the *Indian Express*, Bombay

Khushwant Singh's translation of *Shikwa* and *Jawab-i-Shikwa* is not only a corrective to the climate of general apathy to Iqbal in this country, but also a valuable contribution to the literature of the subcontinent.
The Tribune, Chandigarh

One can hardly find a classic that an Indian has rendered into English verse so well as Khushwant Singh has done....His verse has the same quality and charm his prose has.
Indian Book Chronicle, New Delhi

Translating Iqbal's poetry, especially *Shikwa* and *Jawab-i-Shikwa*, is a forbidding task. Many scholars had tried it before and miserably failed. While some missed the spirit of the Urdu text, others tinkering with the poems' rhythm and rhyme made a mess of their translation. Fortunately, Khushwant Singh has by and large succeeded in retaining in his English version both the meaning and flavour of the original.
The Hindustan Times, New Delhi



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